

The
HOSTLES
of
JESUS CHRIST



The Apostles of Jesus Christ

A Brief Account of their Lives and Acts;
and of the Rise and Expansion of
the Christian Church
up to A. D. 68

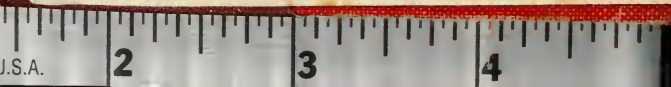
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PREFACE

This book was written at the solicitation of the Deseret Sunday School Union. It is designed for lessons in the Theological department, and the chapters were published during 1916 in the "Juvenile Instructor." They are now slightly revised and presented in book form. It is intended that they shall serve as aids for teachers and members of the Sunday Schools of the Latter-day Saints in their study of the lives of the Apostles of our Lord, of the early rise of the Christian Church, and of the first principles of the gospel, as taught anciently, and as restored to the Prophet Joseph Smith.

The book was written with a view of having the students carefully read and study, simultaneously, its text with that of the Acts of the Apostles. The teacher should insist that this be strictly observed. The corresponding chapters of the Acts, serving as historical threads, should be read before the lessons are discussed. Then, as the questioning proceeds, each particular reference, especially from the New Testament, and where possible from the other books also, should be read by members of the class. This will round out the story and thus indelibly impress the incidents and principles upon the minds of the students.

It is needless to call attention to the fact that the period of the Christian Church under consideration is very important and vital, for the reason that the gospel of Jesus Christ, as the founders under-

stood it, is there treated as originally taught, before false teachers upset the simple doctrines and changed the ordinances, as established by the Savior and as perpetuated by his Apostles. During this period, also, the gospel was rejected by the Jews and was transmitted from Jerusalem through the teachings of Paul, to the Gentile nations in Syria, and westward through Asia Minor to Rome; thence to be extended, intermixed with heathen doctrines, to the modern nations of the earth.

In the accompanying bibliography are named the principal works from which the facts in this book are taken. In addition, credit, as far as convenient, has been given to the various authorities in the text itself. The writer is also indebted to Elder David O. McKay and other officers of the Deseret Sunday School Union, for valuable suggestions.

That the reader may obtain as much testimony pleasure and valuable instruction in the study of this book as the writer has enjoyed during the many odd hours of its preparation, is the earnest wish of

THE AUTHOR.

Salt Lake City, Utah

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The Apostles of Jesus Christ

CHAPTER 1

THE FIRST TWELVE APOSTLES

Introduction.—Jesus Christ, the only Begotten Son of God, came into the world and founded the primitive Church which because of Him was called the Christian Church. He was alone to begin with, but when the time was ripe, He went among the people teaching them the true plan of salvation which is nothing more nor less than how to live here and hereafter in accordance with the will and desire of our Father in heaven. He converted a few to this plan, and from among these He chose Twelve, and taught them the gospel, and to be messengers to assist in the work which He had been sent of His Father to do.

Who these were, their qualifications and functions, how they were chosen, what was their commission or authority, and finally something of the life of each —are a few of the important points to be considered before we take up the story of their acts and teaching which will form the main subjects of this study.

Meaning of Apostle.—Those who are familiar

with* the proper meaning of the Greek word for apostle, tell us that it means an ambassador who not only carries a message, but who also represents the sender—literally, one who is sent forth, as in Matthew 10:5. The Lord has given the meaning to the Prophet Joseph Smith, in a revelation received in 1835, in which it is said, “The Twelve traveling counslors are called to be the Twelve apostles, or special witnesses of the name of Christ in all the world.”

*An apostle, therefore, does not altogether speak and act for himself, but for a higher Power that sent him.] Even the Lord Himself is called an apostle by Paul,^a who declares to his brethren: “consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.” And this same thought is expressed by our Savior Himself in a prayer to His Father:^b “As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them [His apostles] into the world.” The obedient declaration of Jesus: “I came not to do my will but the will of Him that sent me,” also justifies Paul in calling Him by the sacred name Apostle and High Priest.

But while the meaning of apostle embraces ambassador, messenger, envoy or legate—one having a commission from higher power to perform a certain mission—an apostle not only possesses great authority, but also a wonderfully great responsibility connected therewith, for when he acts and

^aHebrews 3:1.

^bJohn 17:18.

+ speaks he acts and speaks by the power and in the name of the greater one who sent him. Hence the importance of the acts of the first apostles, chosen, instructed and sent forth by the Lord to deliver His message to the people who sat in darkness, to build up and establish His Church and Kingdom.

This same thought applies to the apostles of our day, for they, too, have been chosen and commissioned by the same Lord to be messengers of salvation to the nations, and to go forth among the lost sheep of the house of Israel, preaching repentance, and declaring the Kingdom of Heaven at hand, healing the sick, and giving comfort to the poor and needy.

The Twelve Chosen and Ordained.—As stated our Lord began His mission among the Jews as a teacher without followers. His appearance among them marked the beginning of a cause which after His death, resulted in the more perfect organization, by the chosen Twelve, of the Church of Christ as an independent movement.

One of the objects of the mission of Jesus, as it appears from the gospels, was to declare Himself, which He was, the Only Begotten Son of God come to establish the Kingdom of Heaven. To this end He vehemently condemned many of the practices of Judaism, declaring them false representations of the will and commandments of God; and called upon the people to accept Him as the author and revealer of the true and acceptable religious life—the plan of salvation.

He undoubtedly saw from the beginning that the Jews would reject Him. Even when He told them great truths, they were "filled with wrath."^c He said, "No prophet is accepted in his own country."^d "Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the Kingdom of Heaven. But the children of the Kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."^e

He therefore turned His attention to gathering about Him and His doctrines, a company of disciples, or believers from among whom He might choose a select few who, after His departure, would be willing and prepared to carry on the work of establishing the Church and Kingdom. Hence, He chose from among them the Twelve, and sent these ambassadors and witnesses of the Lord forth to preach the saving message which He offered to the world.

These, according to Matthew were:

"Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the Son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the Publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; Siman the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him."

* The Twelve were to be the Lord's personal rep-

^cLuke 4:24.

^dLuke 4:24.

^eMatt. 8:11, 12; see also John

2:19; 3:11, 14, 19; Matt. 16: 21, 23, and many other scriptures.

representatives, called, chosen, ordained, and taught by Himself to carry on the work of building up the Kingdom and preaching the gospel to the people. This is clear from His charge to them:

“He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that reveiveth me receiveth Him that sent me.”^f 10:40

“And He ordained Twelve, that they should be with Him, and that He might send them forth to preach, and to have power to heal sickness, and to cast out devils.”^g

“After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before His face into every city and place, whither He Himself would come.”^h

[There is little further mention in the gospels of a more detailed selection of officers for the organization of the Church, although without doubt Christ must have instructed the Twelve in the perfect plan, which they later taught and sought to establish, and which was left by the Founder of the Church to them to perfect after His rejection and crucifixion by the Jews. Upon them rested the responsibility of continuing and perefecting the work which the Master had founded.

^fMatt. 10:2-4, 40

^gMark 3:14, 15

^hLuke 10:1.

CHAPTER 2

FIRST MISSION OF THE APOSTLES

Given Power.—After the Twelve had been chosen and ordained, the Lord prepared them to be instruments in the expansion of the work which He had come to establish. The apostles had remained in His company for some time since their ordination, during which period they had learned many things through close contact with their great Teacher pertaining to the message which He had to bear. “He ordained twelve^a that they should be with Him; and that He might send them forth to preach.” For the widening out of the work now about to take place, they had learned many precious lessons. They were now to be given power to go out in their holy callings to perform their duty as preachers of the gospel, and to be witnesses of Christ and His mission. That they might do so most effectively, He gave them “power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.”^b

Charged and Sent Forth.—Before they were sent on this their first mission, they were charged with certain commandments to guide their conduct, and as a matter of final preparation, much like our missionaries are charged before they go out into the nations to preach the same gospel message that

^aMark 3:14.

^bMatt. 10:1-42.

Christ proclaimed to the world. The charge given the apostles at this time contained not only instructions for this their first mission, from which they were soon to return, but many admonitions that were to be effective during all the days of their lives, and that were even to remain as guides to missionaries in His service for all time to come.

They were sent forth to the house of Israel, in pairs, with these commandments ringing in their ears, to preach the gospel, heal the sick, cast out devils, to be witnesses for Christ, and otherwise to administer in the authority of their calling.

To send them out in pairs was a wise provision which has also been adopted in our day. Men may in this way counsel and study together; aid and protect each other in danger, and point out each other's faults, and so grow in grace and wisdom.

And so, as the Lord sent forth His apostles, He charged them with these parting instructions, as given by St. Matthew, instruction all of which, barring only those few which were local to the time, every missionary should write upon the tablets of his memory and seek to obey, if he would avoid sterility in his labor:

["Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:

"But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

"And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

"Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead,

cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.

“Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves; for the workman is worthy of his meat.

“And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence.

“And when ye come into an house, salute it.

“And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.

“And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet.

“Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrhah in the day of judgment, than for that city.

* Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.

* “But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils: and they will scourge you in their synagogues;

* “And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.

“But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.

“For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.

“And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death.

“And ye shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake; but he that endureth to the end shall be saved

“But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another; for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.

“The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord.

“It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?

“Fear them not therefore; for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed: and hid, that shall not be known.

“What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops.

“And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

“Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.

"But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

"Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.

"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

"And whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

"For I come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

"And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

"He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

"And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.

"He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

"He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth Him that sent me.

"He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.

“And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.”

The Twelve Return.—Where the apostles went and how long they labored on this first mission, we are not informed in the scriptures. To the Lord Himself, in His personal ministry, while they were absent, many important events took place.

The apostles returned about the time of the execution by Herod of John the Baptist in prison. They told Jesus of all they had done and taught. They had gone through the towns preaching the gospel of repentance; had cast out many devils, and had anointed with oil and healed many that were sick everywhere.^c But only little is recorded in the gospels of their labors and ministrations. Their preaching, however, must have created much speculation respecting Jesus, stirred up much interest in the work of our Lord, and was, without doubt, the means of greatly spreading the new doctrine in the regions where they visited. The signs following them bore evident witness of the great Power by whom they had been commissioned, as well as the majesty of the priesthood which they bore.

Similarly, the Seventy, who were called by the Savior on another occasion, were likewise able to testify on their return. They reported that even the devils were subject unto them, through the name of Jesus.^d

^cMark 6:12, 13; Luke 9:10.

^dLuke 10:17.

CHAPTER 3

CALLING AND PERSONALITY OF THE APOSTLES

The calling of the first Twelve Apostles, and their personality, will now receive our attention. Let us consider them in the order named in the gospel of Matthew, and give a brief sketch of them individually.

Peter.—When Andrew brought Simon Peter, his brother, to Jesus, the latter on beholding him, said:

“Thou art Simon, the son of Jonas; thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A Stone.” He was originally a fisherman, with his brother Andrew, and they were partners with James and John, the sons of Zebedee. As Jesus walked by the sea of Galilee one day He saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea. It was then they received their call in the words uttered by the Savior. “Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.”^a They left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired men and straightway forsook all and followed Jesus.^b

The early home of Peter was at Bethsaida, and it is possible that he and his partner-fishermen were friends long before they followed Jesus. Among the traits of character which the life of fishermen would necessarily develop, in naturally healthy characters such as the sons of Zebedee and their

^aMark 1:16-20.

^bCompare Luke 5:1-11.

partners, are courage, vigor, resourcefulness. Traditionally, Peter is considered a rough, uneducated peasant, which is perhaps an exaggeration of one side of the truth; but, as F. H. Chase, writing for Scribner's "Dictionary of the Bible," remarks, while he was without the formal educational training which fell to the lot of St. Paul; Peter must have had close knowledge of the Old Testament, and with his brothers had the influence of a religious home and the synagogue. They also had some knowledge of Greek. And without doubt they had felt the spell of the Messianic hope, as appears from Andrew's exclamation in John 1:41. Dr. Talmage^c says: "We are not justified in regarding him (Peter) as unlettered and ignorant. True, both he and John were designated by the council of rulers as 'unlearned and ignorant men'^d but this was spoken of them as indicating their lack of training in the schools of the rabbis; and it is worthy of note, that the members of that same council were amazed at the wisdom and power manifested by the two whom they professed to despise."

Of the character of Peter to whose nature we shall have further occasion to refer in this study, it is said by Dr. Talmage:^e * In temperament Peter was impulsive and stern, and until trained by severe experience, was lacking in firmness. * He had many human weaknesses, yet in spite of them all he eventually overcame the temptations of Satan and

^c"Jesus the Christ," p. 218.
^dActs 4:13.

^e"Jesus the Christ," p. 219.

the frailties of the flesh, and served the Lord as the appointed and acknowledged leader of the Twelve."

Peter is named as the first apostle in the various enumerations in the scriptures, and Peter, James and John belonged to "the innermost circle of our Lord's associates and friends. They alone were admitted into His presence when He raised the daughter of Jairus, and at his transfiguration, and during the agony in the garden."^f

Frederick Farrar^g refers to the generous, impetuous, wavering, noble, timid impulses of Peter's thoroughly human but most lovable disposition.

Though the time when, and the place where, Peter suffered death are in duobt, and not named in the scriptures, the manner of death, crucifixion, is implied in John 21:18, 19. Peter himself^h said he was to put off his tabernacle soon, as the Lord had showed him. It is traditionally believed that he suffered death in Rome toward the close of Nero's reign, between 64 and 68 A. D.

Peter, James and John, as resurrected beings, ministered to the Prophet Joseph Smith, restored the Melchizedek priesthood, ordained and confirmed him to the apostleship which they held, and to be a special witness of the name of Christ, to bear the keys of the ministry and of the things which Jesus had revealed to them—confirming upon him

^fFarrar, "Life of Christ," p. 135.

^gFarrar, "Life of Christ," p. 237.

^h2 Peter 1:14.

the keys of the kingdom and the dispensation of the fulness of times, in which all things both in heaven and earth are to be gathered together in one.”ⁱ

Andrew.—Andrew was one of two youths who came earliest to Christ, and who received a testimony that he had been in the presence of Him who was the Desire of All Nations, the True Sceptre of Israel. “The other youth,” so Farrar records, “suppressed his own name because he was the narrator, the beloved disciple, the Evangelist St. John.”

Andrew was a brother of Simon Peter, and a son of Jonas, or John, and Joanna. His home was in Bethsaida, in Galilee, and he was a partner with his brother Peter and with James and John in the fishing business, on the sea of Galilee. He had the honor with Peter of being called and promised by the Lord, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” Prior to his meeting with Jesus, he was a disciple of John the Baptist, and from him had been taught to look forward to the coming of the Christ.

The gospel of St. John relates that the Baptist on one occasion pointed out the Messiah to him, saying, “Behold the Lamb of God.”

“Memorable as this testimony was,” says Farrar^j “it seems on the first day to have produced no immediate result. But on the second day, when the Baptist was standing, accompanied by two of his disciples, Jesus again walked by and John, fixing

ⁱDoc. and Cov., 27:12, 13.

^jFarrar “Life of Christ,” p. 76.

upon Him his intense and earnest gaze, exclaimed again, as though with involuntary awe and admiration, 'Behold the Lamb of God!'

The two disciples heard him speak and they followed Jesus who, seeing them, turned and asked, "What seek ye?" They answered by asking, "Where dwellest Thou?" Then Jesus gave the answer which always invites investigation: "Come and see."

Andrew thereupon followed Christ, was taken by Jesus to His dwelling and spent the day there. Andrew was apparently convinced of His divinity, for the following day he searched out his brother Peter, and it must be surmised, enthusiastically exclaimed to him: "We have found the Messiah which is, being interpreted, the Christ." He then took Peter to the Lord who gave to Peter a new name Cephas, which by interpretation means, "A Stone."^k

It is probable also that Andrew was instrumental in the call of Philip who was of the same city. Very little comparatively is heard of Andrew after his call, although tradition gives him a conspicuous place among the Twelve.

Andrew is mentioned in John 6:8, in connection with the miracle of the loaves and fishes; and on the occasion when certain Greeks wished to meet Jesus, Andrew and Philip told the Savior about their wishes.^l Andrew, with Peter, James and John, once had a private interview with Jesus, when they

^kJohn 1:35-42.

^lJohn 12:20-22.

were told of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the signs of the latter days that should follow the preaching of the gospel and precede the coming of the Lord.^m Andrew is also mentioned in the first chapter of Actsⁿ in connection with the Lord's ascension into heaven.

Much religious and romantic literature clusters about the life of Andrew, in the writings of the early centuries of the Christian Era. A tradition of unknown date and questionable authenticity accredits him with preaching in northern Greece, Epirus and Scythia, and as being martyred on a cross shaped like an X, at about 70 A. D., but we have no authentic records on these points.

James, the Son of Zebedee.—James I. called also the "greater" to distinguish him from James the son of Alphaeus, and James the brother of the Lord, was a son of Zebedee. His mother was Salome, who is said to have been a sister of Mary the mother of Christ, and who was present with Mary at the time of the crucifixion. If this is true, James and John his brother, were first cousins of the Christ. This may be one reason why their mother urged their claim to the highest position in His Kingdom.^o It is a fact that throughout Christ's ministry, James and his brother John were, with Peter, the preferred apostles, and probably were chosen by Christ to act as the head of His Church. These three wit-

^mMark 13.
ⁿActs 1:13.

^oMark 10:35-45; Matt. 20:20-28.

nessed the raising of the daughter of Jairus^p were present at the transfiguration,^q and also accompanied Christ to the Garden of Gethsemane prior to His crucifixion;^r and finally they administered in our day to the Prophet Joseph Smith in the restoration of the Mechizedek Priesthood.^s

James and his brother John were partners with Peter and Andrew in the fishing business and were engaged in mending their nets in their boat on the sea of Galilee when Christ called them to be His disciples, in these words, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." They thereupon left the boat with their father and the hired servants and followed Christ.

Their is a legend to the effect that James preached the gospel in Spain, and that after his death his bones were taken to Spain where they lent miraculous aid to the Christian armies of Spain in their wars with the infidel Saracens. A church was built over his tomb and it became famous as a place of pilgrimage throughout Europe.

James was the first of the apostles to suffer martyrdom for the name of Christ. His zeal in the cause of the Messiah attracted the attention of Herod Agrippa, grandson of Herod the Great, and brother of Herodias who was the cause of the murder of John the Baptist. Agrippa was seeking to increase his popularity by suppressing the Christians,

^pMark 5:37.

^qMatt. 17.

^rMatt. 26:36, 37.

^sDoc and Cov. 27:12; "History of the Church," Vol. 1, pp. 40, 41. Note.

and killed James with the sword shortly before the Passover, in the year 44 A. D.^t As a punishment for his iniquity, Agrippa was smitten by an angel of the Lord and eaten of worms.

^tActs 12:1, 2.

CHAPTER 4

CALLING AND PERSONALITY OF THE APOSTLES (Continued)

John, the apostle of love, the author of the fourth Gospel, was the son of Zebedee and the brother of James I, with whom he was called to follow Christ.

His call to be one of the apostles is set forth in Luke 5:8-11; Matt. 4:21-23; Mark 1:19, 20. From these accounts we learn that he was the son of Zebedee, and that he and his father and brother James were fishermen and Galileans. That there were hired men employed by his father has often been referred to as an evidence that Zebedee had some degree of wealth for those times.^a

John was clearly one of the most prominent of the first group of four of our Lord's disciples, Andrew, Peter, James, John, the latter three of whom were the most privileged, being the close companions of the Lord; among these three great apostles, John was the favorite and beloved apostle, the nearest and dearest to the Lord, and the one whom He honored with the highest affection and esteem.

From the few fragments in the scriptures, referring to John, we learn but little of his early life. This, in fact, may be said of the lives of all early apostles. But John perpetuates the action of his companions, and allows others to speak of and for

^aMark 1:19, 20.

him, and is himself lost in the light of his Master's love, and in His shadow he hid himself. His modesty prevents him referring to himself by name in the Gospel which he wrote, and in the ~~first~~ three Gospels he is named only in a few instances. However, what little is said of him is sufficient to create in the thoughtful reader's mind a strong impression of the nobility of his character.

John, with Peter and James, alone were permitted to witness the raising of Jairus' daughter,^b to be present at the transfiguration where Peter, however, was spokesman of the three,^c and nearest Jesus at the agony in the Garden of Gethsemane.^d John was also sent with Peter to prepare the Pass-over.

Farrar,^e speaking of the character of John, remarks that he "was one of those pure Saints of whom the grace of God takes early hold, and in whose life * * * 'reason and religion run together like warp and woof to weave the web of a holy life'."

The fourth Gospel makes it quite probable that Salome, the mother of John and James, as appears from a comparison of Matthew 27:56, and Mark 15:40, was a sister of the mother of Jesus, and thus very closely related to the Savior. The silence of the New Testament narratives on this point, however, is significant. But if the inference is correct,

^bMark 5:37; Luke 8:5.

^dMatt. 26:37; Mark 14:33.

^cMatt. 17:1; Mark 9:2; Luke 9:28.

^eFarrar, "Early Christianity," chapter 24.

it may account for the readiness with which Zebedee accepted, without murmur, the departure of his sons as well as his partners, Simon Peter and Andrew, with the Lord, when He called them from their fishing labors on Galilee to follow Him to become fishers of men. It may also account for the almost audacious request which Salome presented to the Savior^f that her two sons might sit on the Savior's right and left hand when He should come in His Kingdom. It may be surmised that, like the Jews generally, she, too, may have cherished a vision of a temporal rule. On this occasion, the brothers were taught certain lessons about the sorrows and tribulations through which they would have to pass to such exalted fellowship.

Reasons from the scripture may be related to show a probable cause why the brothers John and James were called Boanerges, or sons of Thunder, by the Savior. It was doubtless because of their zeal in the Lord's service, though that zeal had often to be restrained. John's jealous love of the Master, on one occasion, caused him to forbid one who was not a follower of the apostles to cast out demons.^g The question merited the gentle rebuke which he received, "Forbid him not." On another occasion John and James would have had fire from heaven consume the Samaritans because they refused to receive Jesus.^h Here again they were rebuked.

^fMatt. 20:20.

^gMark 9:38; Luke 9:49

^hLuke 9:54, 55.

At the last supper, taking the account from John himself, though his name is not given, it was John who sat next to Jesus, leaning his head upon the Savior's breast;ⁱ and John who stood under the Cross, on the day following, and received the charge from the dying Christ to take special care of the Lord's mother,^j which John promptly did by taking her to his own home.

In the acts of the Apostles, we shall see that John is hidden behind the more prominent figure of Peter.

Medieval legend characterizes John as a man of effeminate softness, owing perhaps to his advocacy of love among the Saints; but this conception, which has persisted even until our own day, is not justified by the letter of the gospel. Where can we find more thrilling utterances of the wrath of God against sin than is set forth in John's gospel?^k

* It was John who first recognized the resurrected Savior on the shores of Galilee, and declared to Peter, "It is the Lord" (John 21:7).

It was John, the beloved apostle, who received encouragement from the lips of the Savior for his hope that he might have power over death and tarry to bring souls unto Christ until the Savoir come.^l

With Peter and James, John appeared to Joseph

ⁱJohn 13:23-25.

^jJohn 19:25-27.

^kJohn 3:18-21, 36; 5:28, 29; see also 6:70; 7:23, 24; 8:23, 24, 44; 9:39.

^lJohn 21:21, 23; Doc. and Cov. sec. 7; Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi 28:1-12.

Smith and Oliver Cowdery, and ordained them to the holy Melchizedek priesthood, from which ordination all who hold this priesthood in our day, have received their authority.^m

Philip, one of the Twelve Apostles, belonged to Bethsaida of Galilee.ⁿ ~~He~~ He is the fifth in the list of those who became followers of Christ, and the first apostle whom the Lord personally found and called.^o It is probable that, like his fellow townsmen, Andrew and Peter, he had been a disciple of John the Baptist, because it is recorded that his call took place near Bethany, beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.

Philip was called on the day following Christ's interview with Peter, when it was the Lord's purpose to leave the district for Galilee.^p It was Philip who communicated his discovery of the Lord to his friends Nathanael (Bartholomew), and who described Jesus, according to his defective information at the time, as the son of Joseph.^q When he was unable to answer Nathanael's objection, that nothing good could come out of Nazareth, he called on his friend to "come and see," and thus obtain experimental evidence for himself. Philip was thus the means of not only bringing one soul to Christ's presence, but of bringing that soul under the Lord's saving power, and of having him chosen as witness of the Lord.^r

^mDoc. and Cov. 27:12; also ^pJohn 1:28-43.
27:8. ^qJohn 1:45.

ⁿJohn 12:21.

^rJohn 1:49.

^oJohn 1:43.

Philip became the head of the second quartet of apostles, his name standing in that order in each of the lists.^s In the gospel history his name appears otherwise only three times, each reference to him, except the bare statement that he was one of the Twelve, being made by John, his fellow townsman, who, it may be possible, so one commentator suggests, appeared anxious, in the case of Philip and Andrew, "to rescue from oblivion or obscurity, through a few significant reminiscences, some characteristics of those two friends of his youth."

* When the five thousand were fed, Philip was asked the question, "Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?" Since it is evident the Lord Himself knew what He would do, the question was doubtless put to Philip to test and prove him. Philip replied that "two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that all may have a little."* He showed in this case neither faith in nor expectation of miraculous intervention.^t

* Philip once asked (John 14:8,9) to be shown the Father, and it was then that Jesus mildly reproved him by asking, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?"

H. Cowan^u says: "The main lesson to be learned from the incidents of Philip's history, as related in the gospel, is this: that while a sincere believer needs to be thoroughly 'proved'^v and instructed,

^sMatt. 10:3; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:14.

^tJohn 6:5, 6, 7.

^uScribner's "Dictionary of the Bible," Vol. III, p. 835.

^vJohn 6:6.

before he is fit to 'go forth' as a leader in the Church; on the other hand, if the portion of truth already apprehended be faithfully held, he may, amid defective knowlege^w and imperfect spiritual insight, possess the genuinely missionary spirit, be instrumental in leading others to Christ, and advance the kingdom of heaven."

The labors of the Apostle Philip were greatly obscured in the acts of the apostles by the widely prevalent confusion in names between him and the Evangelist Philip. This confusion arose very likely from the wider use, after Pentecost, of the word apostle as including others besides the Twelve.

Early commentators state that Philip, one of the Twelve, was one of the "great lights" of Asia. He died a natural death and is buried at Hierapolis together with his two aged virgin daughters. It is also generally conceded that another daughter, "who lived in fellowship with the Holy Spirit," was buried at Ephesus.

There are many uncertain and very unreliable traditions relating to the labors of Philip; but we know with reasonable certainty that he lived for many years, and died, in great honor, at Hierapolis in Phrygia.

Bartholomew (or Nathanael).—The sixth of the apostles, in the order mentioned by Matthew, is named in the scripture only in connection with his calling, as one of the seven to whom the risen Savior

^wJohn 1:45, "Son of Joseph."

manifested Himself at early dawn after a night of fruitless fishing, and as one of the eleven in the upper room after the ascension.

Bartholomew has been generally identified, both by early Church writers (9th and 16th centuries) and by more modern commentators, as Nathanael, though there are important authorities that have written in opposition to this view.

Bartholomew is called an apostle in the lists of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Acts 1:13. These do not name Nathanael. In the gospel of John, Bartholomew is not named, but an apostle is called Nathanael, for the second time in chapter 21:2, in the account of the fruitless night of fishing with Peter after the resurrection of Christ. The passage reads:

"There were together Simon Peter and Thomas, called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of His disciples."

Here, then, Nathanael is named as among the disciples, by whom* the evangelist writer evidently means apostles.

Dr. Talmage^y says: "It is practically certain, however, that he [Bartholomew] is the man called Nathanael in John's Gospel."

J. A. Selbie, writing for Scribner's "Dictionary of the Bible," states that the strongest arguments in favor of the identification are: "(1) That Barthol-

*Judging from the context, John 20:24, 25, and 21:14.

^yTalmage, "Jesus the Christ," page 222.

omew is never mentioned by St. John, nor Nathanael by the Synoptists; (2) that in the lists of the Synoptists, Bartholomew is coupled with Philip, which tallies with St. John's statement that it was Philip that brought Nathanael to Jesus. It is easy to understand how St. John, with his fondness for symbolism, should have preferred the name Nathanael (=God has given it) to the mere patronymic Bartholomew (=son of Talmai). Supposing the identity established, we know nothing of Nathanael Bar-Talmai further than is recorded in John 1:45-51; 21:2. The tradition as to his preaching the gospel in India and his martyrdom are entitled to no credit."

Nathanael is named first in John 1:45-51. Here he expressed doubt, upon being told that they had found Him of whom Moses wrote, that anything good could come out of Nazareth. He is finally converted, however, when the evidence of Christ's supernatural power is manifest. It was then the Savior declared him to be an "Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile."

* It was Philip of Bethsaida who found and introduced Nathanael, and who said unto him:

"We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

"And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip said unto him, Come and see.

"Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and saith

of him, Behold an Israelite, indeed, in whom is no guile!

"Nathanael saith unto Him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.

"Nathanael answered and saith unto Him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; that art the King of Israel.

"Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these.

"And He said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."

CHAPTER 5

CALLING AND PERSONALITY OF THE APOSTLES (Continued)

Thomas, who is assigned the seventh place among the apostles, by Matthew, is said to have been a native of Antioch. He is also called Didymus, that being the Greek word signifying "twin," as Thomas is the Aramaic or Hebrew.

Neither Matthew, Mark nor Luke make any special mention of Thomas, but three incidents of his life are recorded by John, which reveal the singular charm of his personality, his devotion to Christ, and his skeptical, doubting nature. When Christ was called to Bethany, because of the death of Lazarus, His disciples tried to dissuade Him from going, because the Jews had sought to stone Him, and the disciples feared for His safety there. When Jesus, nevertheless, declared His intention of going, Thomas said to the disciples, "Let us all go that we may die with Him."^a

*His devotion to his Master, and determination not to be separated from him, are again shown when at the Last Supper Jesus announced that He must depart, and leave them to follow. Thomas asked, "We know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?"^b This question, coming on the very eve of Christ's crucifixion, also shows that, even at that late hour Thomas failed com-

^aJohn 11:16.

^bJohn 14:5.

pletely to understand the mission of Jesus and the necessity for His sacrifice.

His inability to comprehend the mission of Christ was probably the reason for his statement that he would not believe in the resurrection of his Lord, unless he could see and feel for himself the wounds in the crucified body. But when Christ later appeared and satisfied his doubts, his recognition of the Master was immediate and adoring: "My Lord and my God." This loving and reverent confession of faith was met by Christ with the gentle reproof: "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."^c

The mission work of Thomas is supposed to have been done in Parthia—a part of what now is Persia. Tradition which is not substantiated says that he went even farther east and established Christianity in India, becoming the traditional founder of a sect known as the Christians of St. Thomas. His grave was believed, by the early Church, to be at Edessa, in Mesopotamia, a city which is known in the Bible as Ur. One tradition has it that he died a martyr in India; another that he died a natural death, and that his bones were taken from Edessa to Italy during the crusades.

Matthew the Publican.^d—The custom officer;^e an apostle of the Lord, and the author of the first gospel, assigns himself the eighth place in his own

^cJohn 21:26-29.

^eMatt. 9:9.

^dMatt. 10:3.

record. He is called Levi, in Mark 2:14; and Luke 5:27; but since he is also called there, customs officer and Publican, the identification is complete. It is likely that, as with Simon Cephas, Matthew was a later name given after his call to the apostleship. This fits the probable meaning of the name: "Jehovas's Gift." At any rate Matthew was the name by which this apostle became known in Christian circles; and in the official list of Mark, he is so called even if in the account of the call of Matthew, Mark, with strict historic fidelity, gives the name as Levi. It will be remembered that Thomas is also called Judas; and, as we have seen, Bartholomew was likely Nathanael's usual Christian name.

The call of Matthew is interesting. Here are three accounts:

Matthew 9:9: After Christ in his own city had healed the man with the palsy, "And as Jesus passed north from thence, He saw a man named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and He saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed Him."

Mark 2:14: Jesus went forth again by the sea side, and He taught the multitude that followed:

"And as He passed by, He saw Levi, the son of Alphaeus, sitting at the receipt of custom, and said unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed Him."

Luke 5:27: The multitude who had followed Christ glorified God and were filled with fear, exclaiming. We have seen strange things today:

"And after these things He went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom, and He said unto him, Follow me.

"And he left all, rose up, and followed Him."

Matthew asked Christ to dine with him, at a great feast in his home, and invited a large company of publicans and others to eat with them. Matthew, we may surmise, desired to introduce the Lord, his Master whom he had chosen to follow, to his friends and companions, probably anxious that they, too, might hear some of the gems of the message which the Savior had to deliver. And he was not mistaken, as we learn from the remaining account of the incident. One gem in particular fitted the occasion:

"But the Scribes and Pharisees murmured against the disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?"

"And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.

"I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

We must infer several things from the call of Matthew. Judging from his actions, he must already have been familiar with the gospel of Jesus as preached in Capernaum. There is no evidence that he, like a number of earlier apostles, had been a follower or adherent of John the Baptist. His feast in honor of Jesus^f undoubtedly marked

^fMark 2:14-27; Matt. 9:9-13.

the new relationship. His call, we are told, cannot be definitely dated. It could scarcely have been in the very earliest days, for when he was called, it appears that Pharisaic suspicion was already wide awake.

The only other facts relating to Matthew concern him as the evangelist who wrote the first gospel. The old controversy as to what language that gospel was written in is still unsettled. It has not been agreed to among commentators as to whether Matthew wrote his gospel in Hebrew or Greek, or both. In 184 A. D., a Greek copy of his gospel was found in the East Indies; and still another in Greek, written on wood, was found about 488 A. D., in Cyprus, which was esteemed very ancient.

Eusebius, quoted by Bartlet,^g assigns stress of necessity as a reason for Matthew writing his gospel in Hebrew: "For Matthew, after preaching to Hebrews, when about to go also to others, committed to writing in his native tongue the gospel that bears his name; and so by his writing supplied, to those whom he was leaving, the loss of his presence."

There is question as to the value of this tradition. George T. Purves,^h referring to this statement, says that, if this is so, "the relation of our Greek gospel to the original is a difficult problem about which the last word has not yet been written." After

^gScribner's "Dictionary of the
"Bible," Vol. III, p. 296.

^h"Christianity in the Apos-
tolic Age," p. 270, Scrib-
ners publishers.

further discussion, Mr. Purves concludes, "We are not warranted * * * in departing from the belief * * * that our first gospel was the work of Matthew. Possibly he issued both a Hebrew and a Greek edition. The effort of recent scholars to recover the original Hebrew by retranslation [from the Greek] either of this gospel alone, or of it in combination with Mark and Luke, cannot be regarded as successful."

Commentators are generally united in the view that no definite or authentic statement can be made regarding Matthew's mode of death nor the date thereof. Unauthorized tradition, as summarized by Farrar, relates that he preached in Parthia and Ethiopia, and was martyred at Naddaber, in Ethiopia. According to St. Clemens, "he lived only on herbs, and practiced a mode of life which was *Es-sene* in its simplicity and self-denial."

* That he was one of the most active disciples after the resurrection of the Lord, and that he traveled and preached the gospel zealously in many lands, is reasonably certain, and is attested by writers outside the scriptures.

James, the son of Alphaeus.—James, the son of Alphaeus, is to us a name, and nothing more. As Farrarⁱ says: "Not one incident is narrated of him; not one utterance is attributed to him in the gospels; not one fact is preserved respecting him by any tradition older than those recorded, or accept-

ⁱFarrar, "Early Christianity," page 310.

ed, or invented, by Nicephonus in the fourteenth century."

* James, the son of Alphaeus, is identified with James the Little, so known because of his small stature. The consensus of opinion among authorities makes him the son of a Mary, supposedly a sister of the mother of Jesus, and wife of Clopas, the Greek equivalent for Alphaeus.^j Matthew and Thomas are likewise sons of Alphaeus; so it appears, from this viewpoint, that James the Less, was a brother of these two and a cousin of Jesus.

The name James was a very common one among the Jews, and consequently we find it applied to six persons in the little Galilean group of early disciples.^k There is little doubt, however, that these six are in reality only three; namely, James the son of Zebedee, the brother of John whom we have already treated; James the Less, the son of Alphaeus; and James, the brother of the Lord.

These three are often confused; and, in fact, the two latter are by some authorities identified. Scribner's "Dictionary of the Bible,"^l and Farrar's "Early Christianity"^m agree, however, that they are two distinct persons, and that James the brother of the Lord was not one of the Twelve, nor even a believer, until after the resurrection, but that his conversion was connected with a special appearance of the Risen Lord" and that he afterwards became an

^jScribner's "Dictionary of the Bible," Vol. II, page 541; Mark 15:40; John 19:25.

^lVol II, p. 542

^m p. 313.

ⁿI Cor. 15:7.

^kFarrar, "Early Christianity," p. 307.

active worker in the Church.^o On the other hand, these same passages are cited by other authorities as applying to James the son of Alphaeus whom they apparently, and contrary to the other viewpoint, identify with the brother of the Lord. James, the brother of the Lord, is certainly the author of the epistle of James, and he became the first bishop of Jerusalem. Many authorities consider it improbable that he was James the son of Alphaeus.

The fact that we know nothing of the Apostle James, if we do not identify him with the brother of the Lord, should not lead us to identify the two; nor to conclude that the work of the apostle was of little or no value. Our lack of information regarding him may perhaps be due to the fact that no close friend among the Synoptists wrote of him. The fact, further, that we hear nothing of him may be evidence in itself that he was faithful to his calling and even energetic in his duties. Many good and even great men are unknown to history simply because they have no friend to write their praises, and we may conclude that such was perhaps the case with James.

~~X~~ Farrar records the tradition that James the son of Alphaeus met his death by crucifixion while preaching at Ostrakine in lower Egypt.

^oActs 12:17; 15:13-22; 21:18; Gal. 2:9-12.

CHAPTER 6

CALLING AND PERSONALITY OF THE APOSTLES (Continued)

Lebbaeus (Thaddaeus), was one of the Twelve, and concerning him the greatest obscurity prevails. His name is given as Lebbaeus in Matthew of the authorized version (1611), but the revised version (1881) rejects Lebbaeus as without sufficient authority. However, from the consensus of opinion by competent authorities who have carefully looked into and studied the subject, the view which identifies Lebbaeus with Thaddaeus, as mentioned in Matthew 10:3; and Mark 3:18, may be accepted without serious hesitation. It may also be concluded without doubt, that Lebbaeus Thaddaeus is the Judas, the brother of James, mentioned in Luke 6:16, and in Acts 1:13; also the Judas, of John 14:22. In this passage St. John carefully distinguishes Judas, son of James, from the traitor Judas Iscariot.

The only reference to Lebbaeus, Thaddaeus, or Judas, in the New Testament, is by John,^a if we except the mere enumeration of his name in the lists of the Twelve. This passage, however, is worthy of special consideration, for it brought forth a significant reply from the Lord. He had been comforting His disciples with the hope of heaven, and

^aJohn 14:22, 23.

had declared Himself the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and one with the Father. He had assured them that their prayers in His name would be effectually answered:

“And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.”

He had told them “if ye love me, keep my commandments,” and promised them that He would pray the Father to send the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, to them when He should leave, and that He would not leave them comfortless.

Then He told them this saying of truth:

“He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.”

Judas, (Thaddaeus or Lebbaeus) not Iscariot, evidently wondering why he did not manifest Himself more openly, asked Jesus a question which indicated that he had little conception at that time of what was the distinguishing characteristic of a witness for Christ:

“Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?”

The Lord gave him a significant reply, showing that love of Christ and the Father by the world was first necessary, before He or the Father could or would manifest Themselves unto men:

“If a man love me, he will keep my words: and

my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."

But because the world of men will not come unto Jesus, He will not manifest Himself unto them. The apostles did come with love to Him, and so He manifested Himself unto them. And that was the answer to Judas, which applies even to questioners of this day, and it was his duty, as an apostle and a witness of Christ, to testify to these things.

Nothing whatever, aside from these references, is known of the ultimate career of Lebbaeus. Some legendary statements, however, declare him to have been from Jerusalem, and of the tribe of Judah, and that he preached the gospel in the African language. He is also said to have been dispatched by St. Thomas to Abgar, King of Edessa, and to have been martyred at Berytus.

Simon the Canaanite is named as one of the Twelve by Matthew^b and Mark;^c and he is called Simon Zelotes in Luke^d and Acts,^e Cananaeans and Zelotes, being identical in meaning.

The Cananaeans, or Canaanites, the former being the correct reading, were a sect that was jealous in maintaining the Mosaic rituals, and were founded by Judas of Gamala, and known as Zealots, which is the meaning of both Cananaeans and Canaanites. In A. D. six or seven they were in the forefront of the opposition to the census of Quirenius, bitterly resenting the Roman domination. "They would

^bMatt. 10:4.

^cMark 3:18.

^dLuke 6:15.

^eActs 1:13.

fain have hastened by the sword the fulfilment of the Messianic hope," says J. A. Selbie.^f "During the great rebellion and the siege of Jerusalem, which ended in its destruction (A. D. 70), their fanaticism made the Zealots terrible opponents, not only to the Romans, but to other factions among their own countrymen."

* From this information we may surmise that Simon, though nowhere in the scripture mentioned aside from the Apostolic lists, must have been radical, but, coming in contact with the gospel teachings, from them have learned the moderation and the self-control which fitted him for the position to which he was called as a witness of Christ. Had this not been so, he would scarcely have been in position to proclaim the gospel of love.* With his zeal thus turned to the proper channel, he may have been an enthusiastic, as well as a successful, laborer in the gospel cause, though the scriptures are silent as to the nature and character of his ministry.

Judas Iscariot, the betrayer of the Christ, is the last named apostle in the list of Matthew.

Discussions have been numerous as to the meaning of Iscariot, which is his usual designation in the Synoptic gospels. John, in this gospel, calls him, in addition, "the son of Simon"^g in some instances his father being perhaps also called Iscariot. But all four mention Judas in each case as the betrayer.

^fScribner's "Dictionary of the Bible," Vol. I, p. 348. ^gJohn 6:71; 13:26.

The question of the meaning of Iscariot is practically settled, thinks A. Plummer.^h

"All other explanations may be rejected in favor of the view that it means 'Man of Karioth' or 'Kerioth' (ish Karioth). The home of the family being in Karioth, a place which is supposed to have been located in the southern part of Judea, a few miles west of the Dead Sea. All this, notwithstanding we have no direct authority either for the meaning of the name or for the supposition that he and his father Simon were residents of Kerioth. It is certain, however, that he was a Judean of Southern Palestine, while it will have been noticed that the eleven others of the twelve were Galileans. This may have been a cause for estrangement between him and the others, for there was a strong tendency with Judeans, at that time, to look down upon Galileans."

Of Judas' early life, there is no authentic account. He was called to be an apostle with the remainder of the Twelve; and in all the lists he stands last on the last group of four, his place being vacant in the list found in Acts 1:13. He received the Savior's charge with the others, and there is no word said that he did not do the work assigned him. ~~He~~ He seems to have had practical ability, for he was chosen to receive funds (Luke 8:3) which were given to the apostles and also to disburse them.ⁱ This he did dishonestly^j showing his greed.

^hScribner's "Dictionary of the Bible," Vol. II, p. 796.

ⁱJohn 13:29.

^jJohn 12:4-6.

His stingy nature is revealed when he complained against what he called the waste of the costly ointment with which Mary anointed the feet of Jesus. "Then said Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray Him, Why was not this ointment sold for three-hundred pence, and given to the poor?" John says that this statement was made, not because Judas cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the bag and bare what was put therein. Jesus rebuked him by saying: "Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she done this. For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always."^k

Judas' greed led him to the crowning perfidy of his life, the betrayal of his Master to the Priests for thirty sheckles.^l This pilfering from the money box is the only thing told by the Synoptists to Judas' discredit, prior to the great crime of the betrayal. He must, however, have yielded to other forms of temptation, for great crimes are nearly always built upon a foundation of smaller ones.

It has led to much useless debate whether covetousness was the sole or chief cause of his treachery. It certainly was a cause among others which culminated in so fearful a crime that Jesus Christ Himself, who could say to those who hung Him upon the cross, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," was led to say of it: "It

^kJohn 12:1-7; Matt. 26:6-13; ^lMatt. 26:15; Mark 14:11; Mark 14:1-9. Luke 22:5.

had been good for that man, if he had not been born."^m

When Judas understood the condemnation he was under for having betrayed his Master to death, he repented himself and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying:

"I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? See thou to that."

"And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself."ⁿ

Judas then added suicide to his other sins. He became a son of perdition, the end, height, depth and misery of whose punishment no man may understand, except him who is ordained unto this condemnation.^o

^mMatt. 26:24.

ⁿMatt. 27:4, 5; Compare Acts

1:18; John 17:12; Doc. and
Cov. 76:31-48; 132:27.

^oDoc. and Cov. 76:48.

CHAPTER 7

PERIOD BETWEEN THE BETRAYAL AND THE CRUCIFIXION

Having now passed briefly over some of the main items recorded in the personal lives of the first twelve apostles, we shall call attention to a few facts that the reader should bear in mind, to better form a conception of their mission, and the further work which they were to accomplish in the establishment of the Church of Jesus Christ.

Mission and Duty of the Apostles.—Our Lord and Savior was about thirty years of age when He began His labors. He chose His apostles, as we have seen, in the beginning of His ministry, and immediately began to instruct them in the work for which they had been chosen.

For about three troubled years they were in constant association with our Lord, who suffered no opportunity to pass unused to teach them the message which God, His Father and ours, had sent Him to deliver. As we have learned, this message was what we know as the Gospel, the power of God unto salvation. He taught them daily in its saving principles, drilled them in its practical application to their lives and by miracle, discoure, and natural illustrations, sought to impress them with its inestimable value, far-reaching effects, and import-

ance. They were not only to learn to comprehend the principles of the gosple, so that these might be interwoven into the actions of their daily lives, but the apostles were to travel, testify, preach and effectively teach the Savior's message to others, and to bear witness that Jesus is the Christ. They were to administer in the ordinances of the gospel, cast out devils, heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, and declare the kingdom of God at hand. Above all, they were to be witnesses of the divinity of Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God.

The Disciples Slow to Learn.—But notwithstanding all these opportunities, the apostles were slow to learn and it was difficult for them to understand the grandeurs of the mission of our Lord, and even to stand by Him and comfort Him in the troubles which He persisted in declaring unto them, were to come upon Him. They could not conceive of the mystery of the Divine purpose as to the Messiah. The idea of a suffering Messiah was foreign to the current expectations of the Jews. The apostles, notwithstanding their association with Christ, could not understand when He taught them of His rejection, humiliation, suffering and death, and of His exaltation in the resurrection.^a

Peter's Exaltation and Humiliation.—We have already learned how, when Jesus asked His apostles by the way to the towns of Caesarea Philippi:^b "Whom do men say that I am?" Peter answered

^aMark 8:31.

^bMark 8:27.

by power from Father in Heaven, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." For this answer Christ blessed Peter, and gave unto him the keys of the kingdom of Heaven, with authority to bind on earth and it should be bound in heaven; and to loose on earth and it should be loosed in heaven.^c It was a supreme moment of exaltation for Peter. But from that moment, Jesus began to show that he should be rejected, should suffer, die and be resurrected on the third day, and for this Peter rebuked Him. He had the Jewish earthly temper of mind, he misunderstood Christ's mission and declared to the Lord: "This shall not be unto thee." The sight of the other apostles necessitated a public and severe rebuke. The Lord reversed for a time the beatitude just pronounced, and a sentence of rebuke as upon an enemy was given to Peter which must have brought him down unto the dust of humiliation:

"Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offense unto me: for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."^d

It was as if Peter had become the Lord's stumbling-stone. Peter's temper of mind a moment ago, which was then capable of receiving the revelation of the Father, had been so soon succeeded by a temper of mind wholly material and earthly.

Christ's Agony in the Garden.—After the pass-over, and after Jesus had instituted His holy Sup-

^cMatt. 16:13-20.

^dMatt. 16:23.

per, Christ and His apostles went out into the Mount of Olives:

“Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night; for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.

“But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee.”^e

It was then that the impetuous Peter, who already had been rebuked on different occasions, and as we have learned, at one time had been told that he savored not the things of God, but the things of men,^f it was then that he enthusiastically declared:

“Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended.”

“Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.

“Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples.”^g

It will be noticed that Peter was not alone in making this promise. What was the sequel?

“Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.

“And he took with him Peter and the two sons

^eMatt. 26:31, 32.

^fMark 8:31.

^gMatt. 26:33, 34, 35.

of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.

"Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.

"And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.

"And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?

"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

"He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.

"And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy.

"And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

"Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Slep on now, and take your rest: behold the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners."^h

Then followed the betrayal by Judas Iscariot.

The Disciples Forsake Jesus and Flee.—After

^hMatt. 26:36-45.

Judas had given his betrayal kiss, and the multitude, with swords and staves, had laid hands on Jesus, Simon Peter drew a sword and smote off the ear of Malchus, a servant of the high priest. The Lord, the great teacher and exemplar that He was, rebuked him; and even in the present agony and excitement of His mind, was careful not to lose the opportunity to teach and to heal. He manifested the spirit of His gospel and mission, and the love which permeated His soul when he said:

"Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.

"Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?

"But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?

"In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me.

"But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled."ⁱ

So little did they understand; so little faith did they seem to possess, in the power and purpose of the Master.

Peter's Denial of the Christ.—It was not alone Peter who made the promise to die with the Savior;

ⁱMatt. 26:52-56; Luke 22:51-53.

all the apostles promised that though they should die, yet would they not deny Him. But it remained for Peter to be most tested, probably that he might the more have strength for the work of leadership that he was destined in a few days to assume. It will be remembered that these were the words of Peter:

"Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended."ⁱ

The answer of Jesus was:

"Verily I say unto thee, That this night before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice."

The Lord had been vilified by the multitude before the high priest, Caiaphas, where the scribes and elders were assembled. They spat in His face, reviled Him, smote Him with their hands, taunted Him to prophesy, and pronounced Him guilty of death. All this time Peter and the apostles were not near. Matthew relates the sequel:

"Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee.

"But he denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest.

"And when he was gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth.

"And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man.

ⁱMatt. 26:33.

“And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech betrayeth thee.

“Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew.

“And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out and wept bitterly.”^k

Can anything more clearly illustrate the human and the divine, in this wonderful character, the chief apostle?

^kMatt. 26:69-75.

CHAPTER 8

PERIOD BETWEEN THE RESURRECTION AND THE ASCENSION

The Crucifixion.—The trial of Christ before Pilate, His being crowned with thorns and mocked by the soldiers as King of the Jews, His crucifixion on Calvary, His suffering on the cross, and His final exclamations before He gave up the ghost: “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me;” “Into Thy hands I commit myself,” are touchingly related in the gospels.

During it all, He suffered alone for you and for me, and for the sins of all mankind in the world. We read of the faithful women who stood afar off and looked on, but of no apostle near him to alleviate His pains, or administer comfort in His suffering. He trod the wine press alone.

The Resurrection.—Peter is twice mentioned on the day of the resurrection. From these mentions, it is clear that he did not separate himself from the other apostles; notwithstanding his fall in making denial of the Christ, he was still regarded as their natural leader.

On the early morning of that day, Mary Magdalene and others went to the sepulchre, while it was yet dark, and found the stone taken away. Angels at the tomb appeared to them and told them to go quickly and tell his disciples that Christ, according to His own words, is risen from the dead. Mary

returned from the garden to Simon Peter, and to John and, forgetting seemingly the main import of the angel's proclamation: "He is risen," exclaimed, "They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid Him." Peter and John then hurried to the sepulchre together—as they had gone three days before to the High Priest's court. John, being more fleet of foot, arrived there first, but while John came first, he did not enter. Peter, practical and impetuous, went into the sepulchre and noted the orderly arrangement of the clothes and the napkin. John followed, and says in his gospel significantly that he "saw and believed." "For as yet," he continues, regardless of all that Jesus had said about it, "they knew not the Scriptures, that He must rise again from the dead."

Then the disciples went away again to their own homes, Peter wondering at that which had come to pass.^a

Jesus is Seen of Mary.—Later, Mary of Magdala, on her second visit to the tomb, was given the first privilege to see the risen Redeemer. It is recorded that as she turned away, absorbed in the thought: "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him," she turned and saw the Lord standing before her. She knew not it was Him until after a sympathetic and instructive conversation in which Jesus said unto her: "Mary."

^aJohn 20:1-10.

She then recognized Him, and exclaimed: "Master."

He commanded her to touch Him not, but to go and tell His brethren, "I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and to your God." Thus it was that Mary of Magdala "who loved most, for she had been forgiven most," and out of whom Jesus had cast seven devils, was privileged to bear the first startling message to the apostles:

"I have seen the Lord."^b

Christ Appears to Other Women.—The Lord's second appearance was just after He had shown Himself to Mary, when He met the other women, saying: "All hail. And they came and held Him by the feet and worshiped Him." He bade them have no fear, but to go and tell His brethren to go into Galilee, and there they should see Him.^c

He Appears to Peter.—It seems that Peter, the repentant, the rock, was the first of the Twelve to see the risen Christ. Concerning this, however, there is only meagre record. It may be that this appearance, by the love of Jesus was made to seal Peter's repentance with forgiveness. It is suggested by Farrar, that the details of this interview may have been of a nature too personal to be revealed. Nothing is recorded about it except the very short testimonies of St. Luke and St. Paul:

"The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon."^d

^bJohn 20:11-18.

^cMatt: 28:9, 10.

^dLuke 24:34; Farrar, "Life of Christ," chapter 42.

“Jesus was seen of Cephas then of the Twelve.”^e

On the way to Emmaus.—The Lord’s fourth appearance was as a stranger to Cleopas and his companion, and is recorded in very interesting detail by Luke, and by Mark, in short, as follows:

“After that he appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country.

“And they went and told it unto the residue: neither believed they them.”^f

Christ’s Hands are Shown to the Apostles.—Jesus appeared for the fifth time, in a manifestation to His disciples, as they were sitting together with doors closed, for fear of the Jews. He stood in their midst, and said, “Peace be unto you.”

“And when he had so said, he showed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.

“Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.

“And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:

“Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.”^g

Doubting Thomas.—Thomas Dydimus was not

^eI Cor. 15:5.

^gJohn 20:19-23.

^fLuke 24:13-35; Mark 16:12, 13.

present to witness this last named appearance of the Lord, and when the other apostles told him, "We have seen the Lord, he would not believe, but made his noted declaration of doubt which heretofore has been repeated in his sketch. A week had passed and Thomas still doubted, when the apostles were again gathered within, and Jesus again came, the doors being closed, and stood in their midst and said: 'Peace be unto you.' This was the Lord's sixth appearance.

Thomas' expressions of doubt brought forth from Jesus the invitation to him that he stretch forth his finger and put it in the print of the nails; and his hand and put it into the spear wound of His side, and to be "not faithless, but believing."^h

The Appearance by the Sea of Galilee.—The Lord appeared next (the seventh time, and for the third time to His apostles) to seven of the apostles by the Sea of Galilee—Simon Peter, Thomas called Dydimus, Nathanael, the sons of Zebedee, and two others—in all probability, Philip and Andrew, though they are not named.

Considerable time had now elapsed since the resurrection, and the apostles had gone back to their business of fishing, either from necessity or from their belief that it was not further necessary or effectual to continue in the work for which the Lord had chosen them, and for which He had sacrificed His life; so they went back to their fishing. All night they had toiled without result.

^hJohn 20:24-30.

"But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore; but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. * * * * *

"Then Jesus saith unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.

"Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him (for he was naked) and he did cast himself into the sea.

"And the other disciples came in a little ship; (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes.

"As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.

"Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught.

"Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken.

"Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord.

"Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise."ⁱ

When they had dined Jesus asked: "Simon, son

ⁱJohn 21:4-13.

of Jonas, lovest thou me?" The question was repeated three times each time Simon answered in words to this effect: "Thou knowest I love thee." That the Lord should put these questions three times to Peter may be due so Farrar surmises, to the fact and because that Simon Peter had denied Him three times, and it was, therefore, fitting that he should thrice confess Him.

The conversation is recorded by John, and the remarks of Jesus implied the years of Peter's future service and martyrdom:

"So, when they had dined, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

"He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

"He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.

"This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me."^j

Commissioned.—The eighth appearance of our Lord may possibly be the one recorded in Matt. 28:16-20. Here the Lord commissioned the apostles. There were present more than five hundred of the disciples of Jesus collected at this time with the apostles.

"Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.

"And when they saw Him, they worshiped Him: but some doubted.

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."^k

"Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned.

^jJohn 21:15-19.

^kMatt. 28:16-20.

“And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

“They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

“So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.”^l

The Appearance Mentioned by St. Paul.—The ninth appearance, to James, is not mentioned in the gospels, but is referred to by St. Paul, who, after that time was visited also by the Lord and converted.

“For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;

“And that he was buried and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

“And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve:

“After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.

“After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles.

“And last of all he was seen of me, also, as of one born out of due time.”^m

The Ascension.—The time had now come for

^lMark 16:14-19.

^mI Cor. 15:3-8.

Jesus to go to the Father. For forty days He had been on earth in His resurrected state, and in His nine, or perhaps more, appearances had continued to teach and instruct His beloved followers, and to strengthen the wavering faith in His apostles, in Him and in His gospel message and mission. He had sought thus to impress them with the great truth that they were to be witnesses of these things. His ascension is recorded in Luke:

“And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you, but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

“And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them.

“And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.

“And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy.”ⁿ

ⁿLuke 24:49-52; Acts 1:6-9.

CHAPTER 9

AUTHORSHIP AND CONTENTS OF "THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES"

Review and Preview.—In the preceding chapters, the meaning and duty of the apostle's office have been shown, and we have learned how the apostles were chosen. Some of the incidents in the lives of the first Apostles, who were taught personally by the Lord Jesus Christ, have been related; short sketches have been given of them to acquaint the student with their names and the leading incidents of their lives.

In the chapters to follow, it shall be the purpose to show how the apostles, after the ascension of our Savior, proceeded to preach the principles and ordinances of the gospel, as revealed to them by the Lord; and how, through his teaching, the Primitive Church of Christ was established by them.

The purpose shall be two-fold: (1) To familiarize the student with the Acts of the Apostles; and, (2) to teach the principles and ordinances of the gospel as preached and practiced by them. This knowledge is paramount, and of priceless value to us who are Latter-day Saints, and who have had this gospel revealed to us anew through the instrumentality of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

In the course of his study, the student should

memorize certain striking and fundamental passages, in order to have more firmly impressed upon his mind the leading arguments set forth by the apostles to convince their hearers of the truth of the message which they had to proclaim.

Authorship.—Before proceeding, let us dwell a moment on the authorship of this fifth book in the English New Testament canon, known to us as *The Acts of the Apostles*. As pointed out in the Oxford "Bible Helps," "*Acts of Apostles*" is a more correct title than "*The Acts of the Apostles*," because the book really contains a detailed account of only two apostles, St. Peter and St. Paul.

The Acts is the only remaining historical work, according to competent authorities, which deals with the beginnings of the Church History. It is the source of information relating to the founding of the Church of Christ.

The prevalent opinion of both orthodox and unorthodox critics ascribes its authorship to Luke, the writer of the third gospel. That it was written by him is shown by the preface which, like that of his gospel, is addressed to Theophilus, in these words:

"The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and to teach,

"Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the Apostles whom He had chosen."

Another evidence is the sameness of style in the Gospel of Luke and the Acts.

It might also be noted that the writer was evidently an eye-witness to at least some of the events of which he writes; also that he was a companion of St. Paul. Commentators have called attention to certain passages which have become known among students of the Acts as "we" sections, or sections in which the writer speaks in the first person, in great exactness of detail.^a The style of the "we" sections, they declare to be the style of the author of the gospel of St. Luke, who was, without doubt, present when the incidents described took place.

We read in the Oxford "Bible Helps:"

"The Acts of the Apostles is described as 'a second treatise' by St. Luke, and it commences with an inscription to the same Theophilus whom the Evangelist addresses in his Gospel. It is a continuation of the life of our Lord, who, through the promised Spirit, is manifested on earth in the deeds and preaching of the Apostles. Hence it has been called 'the Gospel of the Spirit'."

A. C. Headlam's article, "Acts of the Apostles," in Scribner's 'Dictionary of the Bible,' points out that the Acts were definitely cited as scripture, and early assigned to St. Luke:

"The book is also ascribed to St. Luke by Tertullian and Clement of Alexandria, while undoubted

^aActs 16:10-17; 20: 5-15; 21:1-18; 27:1; 28:7.

quotations appear in Polycrates of Ephesus in the letter concerning the martyrs of Vienne and Lyons, and a possible one in Dionysius of Corinth. By this date the work is an integral portion of the canon in all churches, and there are no signs of any difference of opinion. Nor is there any reason for arguing that because our knowledge of it begins suddenly, therefore the book suddenly appeared in the canon. We have no decisive evidence earlier, because we have no books to contain that evidence. Moreover, the wide area over which our evidence extends seems to imply that the ascription to St. Luke is a genuine tradition, and not a mere critical deduction."

It may be safely concluded, therefore, from tradition, argument, the testimony of ancient writers, and evidences in the book itself, that the author of the Acts of the Apostles was St. Luke, and that the third gospel and the Acts are works of the same person.

Time and Place of Writing.—Only one more thought need be added here: When and where was the book written? This is a disputed question. But no better nor more authentic information can be given than that found in the Oxford "Bible Helps" on this point:

"These points we are left to gather from indirect notices. But it is most probable that St. Luke wrote it at Rome, whither he accompanied St. Paul.^b The fact that he mentions events of con-

^bActs 28.

temporary secular history as one living amongst them, and nowhere alludes to the fall of Jerusalem, makes it certain that it was written before that event; and as the narrative terminates about the year A. D. 61, its composition must have been soon after that date, and probably not later than A. D. 63."

Contents.—There is a clear evidence of method in the construction of the Acts, and the author had a definite aim in the writing of the book. He constructed, as has been pointed out by Headlam, a history with an artistic unity, narrating events as he believed them; and he gives a thorough, consistent history of the period over which it extends. His history, from the very beginning, shows a clear idea of historical perspective, and of the stages in the growth of the community.

Three main points stand out indicating the contents of the book:

One. The divine endowment of the Apostles by the Holy Ghost, according to the Lord's promise, that they might receive power for their work.

Two. Their work was to be the extension of the gospel in the stages as marked by the words, Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost part of the earth, as stated in the first chapter of the book. When the apostles came together they asked of the resurrected Lord, saying:

"Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

"And He said unto them, It is not for you to

know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power.

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

They were to remain in Jerusalem, however, until the promise of the Father was fulfilled, and they were endowed with the Holy Ghost.

Three. A detailed account of the labors of St. Peter and St. Paul; the birth of the Church and its spread to Samaria and Antioch, under the administration of St. Peter; the extension of the Church to the Gentiles under St. Paul, and his missionary journeys, and his imprisonment and voyage to Rome.

Relating the contents of the book, we have this from the Oxford "Bible Helps:"

"The book is a 'Book of Origins.' It is the earliest sketch of the formation and spread of the Christian Church. It tells of the first Apostolic miracle, the first Apostolic sermon, and the first rise of ecclesiastical organization, the first persecution, the first martyr, the first Gentile convert, the first European Church.

"Thus we trace the progress of the Christian society from a small Jewish sect to a universal Church. The same marks of catholicity as regards the offer of the Glad Tidings to the entire human race, which we notice in the third gospel, are maintained in the Acts; only what is in the gospel

‘prophecy, indication, type, and parable’ is in the Acts converted into ‘fulfilment, fact and history; and though the book touches in all directions upon contemporary events, politics, and topography, ‘no ancient work,’ to use the words of Bishop Lightfoot, ‘affords at so many points so many tests of veracity’.”

To us Latter-day Saints the testimony of the Acts of the Apostles is very important. For the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is an exact duplicate, in first principles and organization, of the early Church, as founded by the Savior Himself, as He taught them to His Apostles, and as they organized the Church and promulgated and taught the principles of the gospel received by them from Jesus Himself.

This same gospel was adulterated in the ages which followed the death of the apostles, and it was restored in its purity by the appearance of the Father and the Son, and holy messengers, to the Prophet Joseph Smith, in modern times.

We are living under its restoration—under the administration of apostles and prophets who have restored to us the plan, and conferred upon us the authority, and the gift of the Holy Ghost. We enjoy this distinction by the direct command of our Lord and Savior Himself, and by the administrations of John the Baptist, and of Peter, James, and John, who conferred the authority of the holy Priesthood—the agency of God—upon the Prophet Joseph Smith through whom we have received it.

CHAPTER 10

THE RESURRECTION

Reality of the Resurrection.—The abundance of scriptural evidence attests clearly the reality of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. In fact, from all sources of information, we learn that while the apostles were dismayed at His death, His subsequent appearances, and His resurrection from the dead, reestablished them in their faith in Him as the Redeemer of the world and the Messiah to come. They were convinced by actual contact, by sight, and by feeling, beyond doubt that He not only lived again, and that His body was raised from the dead, but that God had clothed Him with power. This conviction explains their confidence also in proclaiming the resurrection of His dead body, as we learn from many testimonies fearlessly expressed by them: "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we are all witnesses," cried Peter to the multitude, on the day of Pentecost. And his testimony was reiterated time and again, in the ministry and testimony of the apostles.^a

Evidences on which the Testimony of the Resurrection is Based.—These are many, as we have already learned, and they were not afterthoughts; for the belief was as strong and general in the be-

^aActs 2:24-32; 3:15; 4:10; I Thess. 4:14; I Cor. 15:4-8; 15:13-30.

ginning of the Church as at any time following. This is attested, (1) not only by Luke's narrative,^b but by many infallible proofs. For forty days after His passion, Jesus appeared alive to His chosen apostles and others, at divers times and places, and was seen and heard, "speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God." It is attested, (2) in the speeches of Peter, reported by Luke. It was mentioned, (3) by Paul as one of the commonplace beliefs of the Christian faith; and by him declared to be the saving, basic principle upon which all Christianity rests.^c Peter also^d strongly emphasizes the reality of the resurrection of the body of Jesus. Further, Paul utters the consoling truth that all believers in Christ, and Him resurrected, who are and have bodies like unto Jesus, shall be resurrected and have bodies none the less material because they will be also spiritual.

The belief, we may say the knowledge, of the early apostles concerning the literal resurrection of Jesus—including both spirit and body,—was not of gradual formation. It was immediate, early and living knowledge, which they never after sought to modify, and their descriptions of it was the same throughout, in all essentials.

Furthermore, they declared publicly the fact to many trustworthy witnesses who were well-known. While the apostles were the official witnesses,^e

^bActs 1:3.

^cI Cor. 15:1-58.

^dActs 2:31; 10:41.

^eActs 1:22; 10:41; I Cor. 9:1;
15:5-8; John 21:14.

James and many others confirmed their testimony, and it is evident that large numbers of people must have received evidences of the reality of the resurrection of Jesus, on their own account, and not on the report of the few. He appeared personally to Peter^f and also to Paul,^g but neither of these are content in their public utterances to let the fact rest upon their own testimony. Almost invariably they declared that the evidence rested upon all the apostles whose testimony was generally proclaimed and known.^h

When so many people at various times and together received and believed such physical evidences of the reality of the resurrection, we must conclude that it had a firm foundation. We believe the testimony of the apostles, and we know that our risen Redeemer lives.

George T. Purves, D. D., recently professor of New Testament literature in Princeton Theological seminary,ⁱ says:

"The testimony is not merely that His body disappeared from the tomb, or that a few persons, who might have had inflamed imaginations, professed to have seen Him, but that a considerable company of people, on many occasions and under a variety of conditions, received what they believed to be sensible proofs of His appearance to them in the same

^fLuke 24:34.

^gI Cor. 15:7, 8.

^hActs 2:32; 3:15; 10:41.

ⁱ"The Apostolic Age," 2:12
13, 15.

body which had expired upon the cross. Judging from these fragments^j of evidences, the apostolic testimony as a whole must have been based on abundant proof.

“No critic, however skeptical, is now disposed to question seriously the honesty of the ‘disciples’ belief. * * * All views, therefore, which deny the objective reality of the event are beset by insuperable difficulties. If we add to these considerations the ethical and rational character of the Christian life manifested by the apostles, the supposition of either dishonesty or mistake in their belief must certainly be rejected. Criticism itself, not swayed by philosophical prejudice, must accept the resurrection of Jesus as a supernatural fact, lying at the foundation of apostolic history.”

The Testimony of the Apostles of the West.—As Latter-day Saints we have not only the evidences of the fact of the resurrection set forth in the New Testament of our Lord, but we have the confirming testimony also of the Holy American Scriptures, the Book of Mormon.

Christ’s Voice to the Nephites.—When Jesus was crucified on the eastern continent there were great disturbances; “the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent: and the graves were opened: and many bodies of the Saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after His resur-

^jMatt. 28:9, 16-18; Luke 24:29; 1:4; Luke 24:36-39; John
John 20:16-19; 21:4; Acts 20:27.

rection, and went into the holy city and appeared unto many."^k

Similar disturbances took place on this western continent. The prophet had foretold, on this continent, the three days of darkness, which should be a sign of the Savior's death,^l and of the calamities that should then overtake the wicked who were not prepared for the great event. Preceding and during the three days of darkness which overtook the land as predicted, there were terrible elemental disturbances, so much so that "the whole earth became deformed, because of the tempests, and the thunderings, and the lightnings and the quakings of the earth."^m During these marvelous disturbances a voice out of the darkness declared wo unto the people because of their wickedness: and called upon them to repent. The Voice declared: "Behold I am Jesus Christ the Son of God. * * * If ye will come unto me ye shall have eternal life."ⁿ Christ had risen and as Samuel the Lamanite had foretold,^o many graves were opened and yielded up their dead, and many of the righteous dead on the Western continent, as upon the Eastern, were made resurrected and immortal beings. We are told that they appeared unto many and ministered unto them.^p

First Appearance of Christ to the Nephites.—

^kMatt. 27:50-52.

^l1 Nephi 19:10; Helaman 14:20-27.

^m3 Nephi 8:4-25.

ⁿ3 Nephi 9.

^oHelaman 14:1-25.

^p3 Nephi 23:7-13; Matt. 27:50-53.

After all the tumult had passed away, and the mourning of the people had been turned into joy, and their lamentations into praise and thanksgiving unto the Lord Jesus Christ their Redeemer, a marvelous manifestation took place. The Lord showed His body and ministered unto the people of Nephi soon after His ascension into Heaven, some forty days after His resurrection on the eastern continent.^q

A great multitude of the people of Nephi were assembled in the Land Bountiful. This land, it is generally believed, embraced the northerly portions of South America, and extended north to the Land of Desolation which embraced Central America and perhaps an indefinite portion of the great land northward. Unto this multitude Jesus appeared in person for the first time and ministered unto them. How it was done is recorded at great length in chapter 11 to 18 of 3 Nephi.

It must suffice here to say that Jesus showed to them His wounds;^s and chose twelve apostles;^r gave them power to baptise and directed them how baptism was to be performed;^t and declared His doctrines unto them,^u including many of the precious teachings which He had revealed to and taught to His apostles on the eastern continent. He also healed the sick which were brought to Him;^v

^q3 Nephi 10:10-18, and the whole chapter.

^r3 Nephi 11:14, 15.

^s3 Nephi 11:18-22.

^t3 Nephi 11:28-30.

^u3 Nephi 11:31-41; 12:13; 15:15, 16.

^v3 Nephi 17:6-10.

blessed their little ones;^w prayed with and for the people and their children, until angels encircled and ministered unto them.^x

He administered the sacrament to them;^y commanded them to pray, and instructed them how to pray to the Father in His name.^z Then He touched with His hand the disciples whom He had chosen, speaking unto them as He touched them, and He gave them the power to confer the Holy Ghost.^a Finally, when He had touched them all, "there came a cloud and overshadowed the multitude, that they could not see Jesus. And while they were overshadowed, He departed from them, and ascended into heaven. And the disciples saw and did bear record that He ascended again into heaven."^b

Names of the Twelve Apostles to the Nephies.—Now the names of the Twelve whom Christ chose to minister to the Nephites on the American continent are: Nephi, and his brother whom he had raised from the dead, whose name was Timothy; and also his son, whose name was Jonas; Mathoni, and Mathonihah, his brother; Kumen; Kumenonhi; Jeremiah; Shemnon; Jonas; Zedekiah, and Isaiah.

Nephi went down into the water and was baptized and he then baptized all the apostles chosen by the Lord.

The Second Appearance of Christ to the Nephites.—After His apostles had been baptized, He

^w3 Nephi 17:11-13.

^x3 Nephi 17:14-25.

^y3 Nephi 18:1-14; 26:36.

^z3 Nephi 18:14-25.

^a3 Nephi 18:36, 37.

^b3 Nephi 18:38, 39; 19-4.

reappeared and ministered to them and to the people, thanking His Father in prayer that the Holy Ghost had been given to His chosen apostles; and He then prayed that the Holy Ghost might be given to all who should believe in their words. Many important and wonderful instructions concerning the plan of salvation were imparted, in the three days of Christ's second visit, touching principles taught before to the Jews.^c

Christ's Visit to the Nephite Apostles.—The Lord reappeared once more to the Twelve,^d giving still further instructions on the name of His Church—which was to be “The Church of Jesus Christ;”^e and on many cardinal principles heretofore taught them. He spoke to them one by one asking: “What is it that ye desire of me, after that I am gone to the Father?” They each expressed a desire to remain in the ministry until they arrived at a goodly age, and then to be received into His Kingdom. This He promised all but three, “after ye are seventy and two years old.” But to the three who desired what John the beloved Apostle had wished,^f He said:

“Therefore more blessed are ye, for ye shall never taste of death, but ye shall live to behold all the doings of the Father, unto the children of men, even until all things shall be fulfilled, according to the will of the Father, when I shall come in my

^cThese are found in detail in

3 Nephi 19:1-26.

^d3 Nephi 27:2.

^e3 Nephi 27:4-12.

^fDoc. and Cov., Sec. 7.

glory, with the powers of heaven; And ye shall never endure the pains of death; but when I shall come in my glory, ye shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye from mortality to immortality: and then shall ye be blessed in the kingdom of my Father. And again, ye shall not have pain while ye shall dwell in the flesh, neither sorrow, save it be for the sins of the world: and all this will I do because of the thing which ye have desired of me, for ye have desired that ye might bring the souls of men unto me, while the world shall stand; And for this cause ye shall have fulness of joy; and ye shall sit down in the kingdom of my Father; yea, your joy shall be full, even as the Father hath given me fulness of joy; and ye shall be even as I am, and I am even as the Father; and the Father and I are one!"^g

"A New Witness for God."—Now the testimonies of the Book of Mormon concerning the labors which Christ performed on this continent, His appearances to the apostles and the people His teachings, His granting power and authority to the new Twelve to act for Him in the establishment of His Church in the western world—are additional confirming evidences of the reality of our Lord's spiritual and bodily resurrection.

The Appearance of Jesus to the Prophet Joseph Smith.—An additional convincing testimony of the resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is

^g3 Nephi 28:7-10.

furnished in the testimony of Joseph Smith, the prophet. He was perplexed to know the truth, in the tumult of modern religious opinions. One day in reading the epistle of James,^h he came to the words: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." These words determined him to test the promise of James, and so he went into the woods to ask. The result was a marvelous testimony in a personal revelation and appearance to him of God the Father and our resurrected Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. The Father pointing to the Son, called Joseph by name, and said: "This is my beloved Son, hear him."

Joseph then asked which religious sect was right and which he should join. He was answered that he "must joint none of them, for they were all wrong, and the Personage who addressed me said that all their creeds were on abomination in His sight: that those professors were all corrupt; that 'they draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; they teach for doctrines the commandments of men; having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof.' He again forbade me to join with any of them: and many other things did he say unto me, which I cannot write at this time."ⁱ

As anciently, this modern appearance of our

^hJames 1:5.

ⁱ"Writings of Joseph Smith,"
Pearl of Great Price, pp.

81-86; "History of the
Church," Vol. I, pp. 4-6.

Savior resulted in the restoration of power and authority, to establish His Church upon the earth, to preach and teach the gospel and to perform all the ordinances pertaining thereunto. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is a living witness to its truth. One difference should be noted: This is the dispensation of the fulness of times, and this power and authority is never more to be taken from the earth^j as heretofore, but is to remain until the end shall come. Neither is this gospel to continue as the sole heritage of the Gentiles, but the fulness thereof in these days must be brought forth from the Gentiles unto the house of Israel, and be preached unto the uttermost parts of the earth, unto every creature, with signs following the believer, that it may shine forth out of darkness, and be seen in its full brilliancy.^k

^jDoc. and Cov. 13.

^kDoc. and Cov. 14:9, 10, and 58:64.

CHAPTER 11

BETWEEN THE ASCENSION AND PENTECOST

The Promise of the Holy Ghost and Power.—In the last address of the Lord to His apostles, just before His ascension, He gave them many precious promises and instructions, and among these was especially one, that they should stay in Jerusalem to await the outpouring of the Spirit, that they might be endued with power from on high,^a and be given another Comforter to abide with them forever.^b They were to be baptized with the Holy Ghost, “not many days hence,” both as individuals and as a body. This event was to happen in the same city in which the apostles had been witnesses to the utmost humiliation of their Lord—Jerusalem. It was to be given at a stated time; and they were assured it was not to be “long hence,” perhaps for the reason that they might the more exercise their faith and be more diligently watchful. Faith is ever the basis for action, and the apostles were now in a situation where work was an imperative requirement. Every cloud had fled from their minds because of the resurrection of Christ. And while He had answered their question about the material redemption and restoration of Israel—which they had hoped and intensely desired—with these words: “It is not for you to know the times or the seasons

^aActs 1:4; Luke 24:49

^bLuke 24:19.

which the Father hath put in His own power," an answer which might well tend to discourage their ambitions, yet all this was banished with the knowledge, demonstration, and unshaken conviction that Christ had risen from the dead. Peter, in his appeal to the scattered Jews,^c exclaims, in testimony of the fact, that God had begotten them again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away; but aside from this, they rejoiced exceedingly in the promise of the anticipated commission with power, which they were to receive: "And ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth."^d Luke, the author of the Acts, reiterates the story in a marvelously clear and condensed form,^e showing how the Lord had made plain to them their position and their duties. The Holy Ghost was to come unto them—a power by which they were to be witnesses of Christ, His sufferings, His message, His resurrection, first in the limited borders of the Holy Land, and then in all the world.

The Return from Olivet to Jerusalem.—After the Lord's ascension, the apostles returned from the Mount of Olives to Jerusalem—a Sabbath day's journey. And, by the way, a Sabbath day's journey is 2,000 cubits, or between five and six furlongs, the distance between the tabernacle and the farthest

^cI Peter 1:3, 4.

^eActs 1:1-9.

^dActs 1:8.

part of the camp.^f This is the only place in the New Testament where a Sabbath day's journey is alluded to. They then gathered in the upper chamber, perhaps the same room they had availed themselves of for the Last Supper, and for the gatherings on the "first day of the week," at two of which meetings Jesus had appeared unto them. It was here, too, that the mother of Jesus and other women, and His brothers,^g joined Him at stated times in prayer and supplication. These brothers of the Lord had heretofore scarcely been numbered among the believers, or if they had believed in Christ, it had only been in a material sense. They had now been convinced by the power of the resurrection, and at least one of his brothers had seen the resurrected Lord.^h It is interesting to note that the apostles, contrary to the custom of the Jews, permitted the women to pray with them, an indication of equality in spiritual communion that was thenceforth to develop into the glorious doctrine advocated by Paul, in which all are to be made the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus; and that, among as many as have been baptized into Christ, "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."ⁱ

Filling the Vacancy in the Quorum of Twelve.—About ten days elapsed between the ascension and

^fNumbers 35:5.

^hI Cor. 15:7.

^gActs 14; Mark 6:3; Matt. 13:55.

ⁱGal. 3:28.

Pentecost, and it was in the early days of this time that the vacancy in the quorum, caused by the death of Judas Iscariot, was filled. The names of the eleven apostles are given in Acts 1:13. Peter, James, John, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, Simon Zealotes, and Judas the brother of James.

The choosing was done in the presence of all the believers in Jerusalem who numbered about one hundred and twenty. It was indeed proper that a new apostle should be chosen, so that the organization might be perpetuated and be complete, for Jesus had Himself chosen twelve, "the ideal number," as Farrar remarks, "of the Tribes of Israel." As with the other apostles whom Christ had chosen, it was necessary that the new apostle should be a personal witness of Christ. Hence he must have been a disciple of Christ and acquainted with His works, and have been a witness to the resurrection, and been with the other apostles during the forty days that the Lord went in and out among them, and abode with them between His resurrection and ascension into heaven. Hence, they appointed two who had these qualifications: Joseph called Barsabbas, (which means son of Sabba), surnamed Justus by the Romans; and Matthias.

Then, in conformity with old testament and Jewish customs,^j they prayed to God that He would show them which of these two He had chosen.

^jNumbers 26:55, 56; Josh. 7:14; Prov. 16:33; Luke 1:9.

Then the apostles gave forth their lots, and the lot fell upon Matthias who was henceforth numbered with the eleven apostles.^k Presumably, the lot would be taken in the usual way, the names of the two men being written on tablets, and shaken in a vessel, and he whose tablet first leaped out being regarded as divinely designated.

Peter's Speech.—Before the selection of the new apostle, Peter stood in the midst of the disciples, and made an explanation of the purpose of their coming together, which was, of course, to name a new member of the quorum. In his speech, he applied to Judas a passage from the 109th psalm^l which has hence often been called the Iscariotic psalm; and gave a concise epitome of the traitor's act, by which he fell from his high charge by transgression, and had therefore gone to his "own place," which is explained to mean, to Gehenna, by comments of the Rabbis, on Numbers 24:25. Farrar, in his "Life of St. Paul,"^m explains that this expression, "own place," is a "profound and reverent euphemism, showing one of the many traces of reticence with which the early Church spoke of the fate of those who had departed."

The New Apostle.—Nothing appears to be known of either Joseph Barsabbas, or Matthias, unless it be true, as some commentators assert, that they were among the seventy." Barsabbas is said, by Eusibius, to have drunk "deadly poison, and yet

^kActs 1:26.

^lPsalms 109:8.

^mChapter 5 note.

ⁿLuke 10:1.

by the grace of the Lord suffered no harm." Matthias is said to have been martyred. There were a number of apocryphal writings connected with his name. He is named in one tradition as having labored in Ethiopia, where he evangelized the Ethiopian man-eaters from whom he was delivered by St. Andrew. But another tradition assigns to Matthias, Jerusalem as his scene of ministry and place of burial.

It might be added, in answer to those who consider Matthias' calling on a lower level than that of the other apostles, because he was called by human wisdom in dependence upon divine guidance, rather than by Jesus Himself, that St. Luke, the beloved friend of Paul, apparently endorses the election^o by referring to the "Twelve," after previously^p having referred to them as the "Eleven." Luke's view doubtless represented the general opinion of the apostolic Church.

It is the firm belief of the Latter-day Saints. They believe in the perpetuation of the quorum of Twelve by calling new apostles by divine inspiration, selection, and approval of the Church.

^oActs 6:2.

^pActs 1:26.

CHAPTER 12

PROCEEDINGS ON THE DAY OF PENTECOST

Fundamental Principles.—Three things we take for granted: that the apostles, having faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, had repented of their sins and been baptized for the remission of them. These being the first three principles of the gospel, it is not conceivable that the apostles and the disciples of Jesus had not complied with them.

In the first place they had faith in the Christ, as the Son of the living God, and as the Messiah come to redeem Israel, or they would not have become His followers. It is true they did not fully comprehend His mission, but their faith in Him was none the less founded upon the evidence of His marvelous personality and works.

Then, that they had repented of their sins and turned away from them, is clearly natural. Jesus was pre-eminently a teacher of righteousness, and in His sermons, teachings, and parables, called mightily upon the people to turn from evil and seek first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness. John the Baptist, who came as the forerunner of Jesus, cried repentance, declaring the Kingdom of Heaven to be at hand. From this we gather that repentance was the second necessity for a follower of Christ.

That baptism by water, for the remission of sins

and for initiation into the circle of those who were followers of Jesus, was a requirement, is evident from the fact that not only did John baptize, but also the disciples of Jesus. The Lord Himself was baptized of John in the river Jordan, in the beginning of His ministry, to fulfil, as He said, all righteousness. During Christ's visit to the Western continent He taught to His disciples not only the ordinance of baptism, but He carefully instructed them concerning the manner of baptism. Nephi who stood at the head of the Twelve on this continent, as Peter did in Jerusalem, baptized his fellow apostles in conformity with these instructions of the Lord.

We take it for granted, therefore, that while there is no specific record in the gospels to that effect, all the apostles, as well as the other disciples of our Savior on the Eastern continent, did comply and had complied with this fundamental requirement, and had submitted to this ordinance. They had been baptized.

The Promise of the Holy Ghost Anticipated.—We are justified, therefore, in our conclusion that the apostles had faith in Jesus Christ, that they had repented of their sins, and that, as a matter of course, they had been baptized for the remission of sins and for initiation into the fellowship of Christ. The time had now come when, according to the promise, they were to be baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost. They had waited with keen anticipation for the time to come. It was to

be a change "in themselves and in the world's history—the forecast of a new and eternal consecration to the service of a new law and the work of a new life."^a The apostles were actively alive to their dependence upon power from on high which, up to this time, since the ascension, they did not possess. While Christ was with them He was their light and life; now that He was ascended to the Father, they desired that other promised Comforter—the Holy Ghost.

Pentecost.—The feast of Pentecost was the second of three chief Mosaic festivals. It fell on the fifteenth day after the second day of the Passover, and was held in celebration of the completion of the grain harvest—in fact, in the Old Testament it is called the feast of harvest^b or of weeks^c and also the day of the first fruits.^d It was a very popular and joyful festival, we are told, and on this day special offerings were made which were significant of the finished harvest. People, particularly Jews, from all parts of Palestine and even from abroad, came to attend the celebration. While the Passover reminded them of the goodness of God in redeeming them from Egypt, the land of bondage, it was the feast of Pentecost which reminded them of their possession of the Land of Promise. Hence the key notes of the festival were much like those of our Thanksgiving Day, social gladness, and private and public gratitude.

^aFarrar, "Life of St. Paul," ^cEx. 23:14, 15; Lev. 23:39.
chapter 5.

^dNum. 28:26.

^bEx. 23:16

The Baptism of the Holy Ghost.—It was on this glad day that the promised Spirit descended on all the disciples that were gathered “with one accord in one place,”^e the day when the career of the ancient Church of Christ was more fully inaugurated. It was this day which saw the completion of the first principles of the gospel conferred upon the apostles and the disciples—they were baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost!

Suddenly there was heard a roaring sound as of a mighty wind coming from above, which filled the whole house where the company was gathered. A small tongue, having the likeness of fire, appeared to rest upon the head of each one of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with new tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

We are told that devout men, Jews out of every nation under heaven, were dwelling in Jerusalem, and a large crowd hearing of the manifestation, soon gathered before the house. And they marvelled saying to one another: “Behold are not all these which speak Galileans? and how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?”

And the people in amazement finally exclaimed, “What meaneth this?” But some mocked and said that the apostles were full of new wine, while others in the multitude took it more seriously. It was then that Peter became confident that the time had ar-

^eActs 2:1.

rived to proclaim the Messiah. He left the upper room and went into the street amidst ecstatic praises of God, which continued as the audience increased. The praises of the apostles and disciples do not appear to have ceased until Peter stood up with the other apostles, and lifted his voice to proclaim Jesus Christ and Him crucified, calling upon the vast audience to hearken to his words.^f

His address^g made a profound impression. (The speech should be carefully read, considered and discussed.)

When he had concluded the testimony, and had made plain that the One whom they had crucified was their Messiah and Lord—Jesus Christ—who had been raised up from the dead, and that He it was who had “shed forth this which ye now see and hear,”^h they believed, they were filled with faith, and were pricked in their hearts, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles,

“Men and brethren, what shall we do?”

Peter’s Declaration of the First Principles of the Gospel.—It was then that Peter made the reply which sets forth very briefly and concisely, but in numistakable terms, the first principles and ordinances of the gospel of the Master, which had been completed to the apostles that day in their endowment with power from on high—in their reception of the Holy Ghost:

“Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the

^fActs 2:14-36.

^gActs 2:14-36.

^hActs 2:32-36.

name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."ⁱ

He continued, besides, to testify and exhort, calling upon them to save themselves from this unto-ward generation.

Faith was awakened in many minds, they repented, and did the works that were required; for many gladly accepted his word, and were baptized, and without doubt received the promised Holy Ghost. The close of that day of Pentecost saw the little band of one hundred and twenty, expanded into a company of about three thousand souls.^j

ⁱActs 2:38-39.

^jActs 2:41.

CHAPTER 13

THE GROWTH OF THE CHURCH IN JERUSALEM

Peter's Pentecostal Sermon.—Peter's pentecostal speech was his second since the ascension of Christ—though it was his first doctrinal sermon,—his initial one having been made when the apostles, by the authority of God,^a perpetuated the organization of the quorum of the Twelve apostles, by the selection of Matthias. At Pentecost Peter proclaimed the first principles of the gospel in the natural order in which both John the Baptist and the Savior, had presented them. They were named by him in the order in which we understand them; viz., faith in God and in His Son Jesus Christ; repentance of sin; baptism by immersion for the remission of sin, by one having authority to officiate; and the reception of the Holy Ghost.

There are naturally, of course, many omissions of faith, in this speech, for much more must have been believed by the disciples than this discourse indicates; but it was nevertheless notable and even remarkable for its contents. As far as they went, the truths therein proclaimed by the chief apostle, were an interpretation of the life, mission, and personality of Jesus; and they disclosed the fact that the apostles had learned to give a clear and rational statement of their faith in Him and in His resurrection, and of the foundation principles of the gos-

^aActs 1:24.

pel which the crucified Christ had taught them. And even this early after the ascension, we find them able definitely to interpret the scriptures concerning Him. The promised power was already manifest.

One passage of scripture referred to in Peter's sermon may need a word of explanation.^b It is the prophecy of Joel (2:28-32 which read,) Peter referred to the outpouring of the Holy Ghost on this occasion as "that which was spoken by the prophet Joel." He did not say, however, that it was a complete fulfilment of Joel's prophecy, as some have contended. A careful reading of Joel^c will convince the student that the prophecy was not fulfilled completely at that time. The spirit was poured out upon the great pentecostal gathering, but not upon "all flesh." We read of no dreams and visions at that time, nor of the sun and moon turning into blood, nor of fire and pillars of smoke. These further wonders were without doubt to occur before the glorious coming of the Son of God to judgment, as described in Matthew 24, and were certainly not fulfilled on the day of Pentecost. At that time there was an outpouring of the spirit upon a few, but it shall eventually be poured out upon "all flesh," accompanied with marvelous wonders in the heavens and in the earth. That the whole of the prophecy of Joel was not fulfilled at that time, but would be in the future, we have further evidences in the writings of Joseph Smith.

^bActs 2:14-36.

^cJoel 2:28-32.

On the occasion of the first visit of Moroni to the prophet in September, 1825,^d this heavenly being quoted, among other scripture, this same prophecy, and added the statement that it was not yet fulfilled, but was soon to be.

Joel prophesied that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered; then gave the reason: "for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, shall be deliverance." In the apostles' day, the authority and power was in Jerusalem. But Joel also adds that deliverance "shall be in the remnant whom the Lord shall call." The remnant of Israel are being gathered from all nations to modern Zion "in the American continent. And in Mount Zion "in the top of the mountains"^e the saving law of the Lord—the restored gospel, and the authority of Jesus Christ—are found, in the which there is the same deliverance that there was anciently in Jerusalem, to all who shall call on the name of the Lord.

Growth of the Church After Pentecost.—After the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, the souls who were converted continued steadfastly in the doctrines and in the fellowship of the apostles. They met together in prayers, partook of the sacrament, and enjoyed, in the fear of God with gladness and singleness of heart, the wonders and signs that were done by the apostles.^f There was a rapid and marked growth of the community, whose men soon numbered five thousand,^g and we

^dP. of G. P., "Writings of Joseph Smith," 2:41. ^fActs 2:42-46.

^eIsaiah 2:23.

^gActs 4:4.

are justified in believing that in the three or four years following Pentecost, from what is said in the record,^h the converts were more than trebled.

The believers were not confined to Jerusalem, for the movement spread also into Judea and Galilee, and a little later to Damascus,ⁱ and to strange cities that were foreign and afar off. The message naturally would be carried by travelers and by visitors to the feasts, even to Syria. The activity of the apostles made their progress very impressive, though, of course, in a large city like Jerusalem, the converts formed only a comparatively few of the population.

So far, there had been no disloyalty of the apostles to the national worship, and no interference of the Jews had therefore been made. There had, in fact, been nothing in the ethics of the community that would cause the Romans to interfere, for it seemed to be a very common practice for parties and sects to rise among the excited population; hence this peaceful one had, so far, not attracted the government's attention.^j

Healing of the Lame Man the Beginning of Trouble.—It was the healing of the lame man by Peter, in the name of Jesus, at the gate Beautiful, however, that caused the first opposition.^k Objection came from the Sadducees, to which party most of the nobility belonged, and especially the kindred of the high priests.^l

^hActs 6:7; 11:21.

ⁱActs 9:2; 22:11.

^jActs 5:36, 37.

^kActs 3:1-13.

^lActs 4:6.

The Sadducees were the spiritual descendants of the priestly party. Toward the close of the Greek period of Israel's history they had been anxious to Hellenize the Palestinian Jews, which brought on the Maccabean uprising. They did not believe in the binding force of the oral law nor in the "tradition of the elders."^m in which the Pharisees attached great importance. They held only the written law of Moses binding; and denied the resurrection of the body," and, according to Josephus,^o they also denied future rewards and punishments, and even held that the soul perishes with the body. For these and other reasons the Church of Christ had offended the Sadducees. Their chief priests had been active in securing the death of the Savior. At this time, too, they were deeply engrossed in keeping alive their political prestige—all of which tended to make the religious enthusiasm of the disciples especially obnoxious to them.

The healing of the lame man brought a great concourse of people together, and at the command of the Sadducees, Peter and John were arrested by the temple guard. It may have been, as Josephus intimates, on the charge of fomenting tumult, but the reason given by the writer of the Acts^p was that the rulers were "grieved that they taught the people, and preached, through Jesus, the resurrection from the dead."

^mMatt. 15:2; Mark 7:3. ^oActs 18:1, 3, 5.

ⁿMatt. 22:23; Mark 12:18; ^pActs 4:2.

Luke 20:27; Acts 4:1, 2.

Peter's Address to the People.—When the great concourse of people that were gathered together at Solomon's porch—a portico located on the east side of the temple area—saw that the lame man had been healed, they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

Peter took advantage of the opportunity, in a third sermon, to preach Christ to the assemblage.^q He charged them with having killed the Prince of Life and that they desired a murderer in His stead. From this, it seems probable that many of them had taken part in the crucifixion of the Savior, although Peter declared that both they and their rulers had done it in ignorance.^r This being his belief, he held out to them hope of forgiveness, though not immediately, but eventually, in his declarations calling them to repent:

“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you.”

There is a marked difference between these words and those directed to the people who had already repented, and which were given on the day of Pentecost:^t

“Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”

^qActs 3:12-26.

^rActs 3:17.

^sActs 3:19, 20.

^tActs 2:38.

CHAPTER 14

THE GROWTH OF THE CHURCH IN JERUSALEM (Continued)

The Apostles Before the Sanhedrin.—On the following day, after Peter and John had been arrested for healing the lame man, the Sanhedrin, the highest court of justice, and the supreme council at Jerusalem, a name also applied, in a wider sense, to lower courts of justice, was convoked. There were present not only this body, but “as many as were the kindred of the high priest,” Annas.^a

The council asked the apostles: “By what power or by what name have ye done this?”^b

The officials questioned their authority, notwithstanding the apostles were, perhaps, the only persons present who had divine authority to bind and to loose, to heal and to bless. They had been promised that what they should bind and loose on earth, should be bound and loosed in heaven and that they should “lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.” The gifts of the gospel were theirs by power divine.^c This could not be said of the members of the Sanhedrin.

Peter’s Answer to the Rulers.—Peter answered them by a brave speech, the fourth public sermon of his that is recorded, in which he proclaimed to them Jesus as the Christ, and only Savior, in whom

^aActs 4:6.

^cMark’ 16:14-18.

^bActs 4:7.

only is salvation, "for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."^d He reproached them for Christ's crucifixion, and declared Him the Stone referred to in the old scriptures, which was "set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner."^e

The force and boldness of this talk, the presence of the healed man, and the recognition by the rulers of the apostles as the former companions of Jesus, together with the sympathy of the multitude, doubtless mitigated the decision of the council. It could say nothing against them. The only result was a threat, and a command that the apostles should discontinue their teaching, and that they, henceforth, speak to no man in Jesus' name. This was an impossible request, and a futile threat, to the now bold men who bore the power and authority to establish the gospel of the Master, and it brought forth a stinging and fearless reply and refusal from Peter and John.^f

"Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."

Power Given in Answer to Prayer.—Having found nothing to punish the apostles for, the rulers let them go.^g But while this incident had not been contemplated by the rulers, for it was evidently un-

^dActs 4:8-12.

^eIsaiah 28:16; Ps. 118:22.

^fActs 4:19, 20.

^gActs 4:21.

premeditated, and while the result was favorable to the disciples, it boded ill for the future, and the apostles and their followers evidently realized this, so they prepared for the conflict which their Lord had faced, and which seemingly also lay before them.

Going to "their own company" the apostles reported what had taken place. It was then that the Church unitedly lifted up their voice to God and offered a prayer,^h "grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word," and that "signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy Holy Child, Jesus."

"And when they had prayed the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost and they spake the word of God with boldness."ⁱ

This was the second recorded outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon the apostles since the ascension. The reader will already have noticed what a marvelous change the Pentecostal manifestation had wrought upon the once timid Peter^j who in his speeches was now able to proclaim the resurrection, the supreme importance and the divine majesty of the mission of our Lord and Savior, and fearlessly accuse those who had crucified Him; who, when forbidden by the rulers to speak and teach in Jesus' name, could now fearlessly proclaim: "We cannot but speak the things we have seen and heard."

^hActs 4:24-30.

^jMark 14:71.

ⁱActs 4:31.

In this second enduement, the result was none the less effective than in the Pentecostal manifestation. There was an immediate answer to the prayers of the company, all were "filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness." Great power was also given the apostles to witness concerning the resurrection of the Lorā Jesus. They were doubly fortified to withstand the conflict of the coming days.

All Things Common.—On many occasions Jesus had taught His apostles unity. Evidently this injunction also was practiced by them, not only in spiritual but also, to some extent at least, in temporal things. We are informed^k that the believers were of one heart and one soul; and besides, that they had all things in common, "neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own."

There was evidently a law of consecration given to the former-day Saints, even as there is to the Latter-day Saints,^l for it is recorded that as many as were possessors of lands or houses, sold them, and brought the price of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet. Distribution was then made to every man, according as he had need, which resulted, in connection with other things,^m in a condition which left none among them that lacked.ⁿ

Whether a rigid system of communism or conse-

^kActs 4:32.

^lDoc. and Cov. Sec. 51.

^mI John 3:17; James 1:27.

ⁿActs 4:32-35.

cration was enforced in the Church at Jerusalem, (though the doctrine of consecration of property and common ownership was old even at that date), is a question that commentators differ upon, most of them holding that it was not so. The rule may have been observed only in part; even as in the case of the Latter-day Saints, who, not being able to comply fully^o with the word of the Lord in this regard,^p were given the law of tithing instead^q.

From the splendid instructions in the epistles concerning the helping of the needy and the poor, which was made a part of the religion of the former-day Saints^r as it is now of the Latter-day Saints,^s it would appear that communism, though perhaps the ideal condition and intended, was not generally observed, nor was it an absolute requirement of the members of the community. Each was required to do his part in helping the needy, from the substance that he possessed.

One example of obedience to this law among the former-day Saints is given, it being the case of Joses, called Barnabas, the son of consolation, by the apostles who was a Levite from Cyprus. He sold his land, brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.^t

Ananias and Sapphira.—These people practiced duplicity. They sold a possession, and kept back

^oDoc. and Cov. 105.

^rJames 1:27; 1 John 3:17.

^pDoc. and Cov. 27:11-18; 78;
104

^sDoc. and Cov. 38:35; 42:30-
38; 44:6

^qDoc. and Cov. 119.

^tActs 4:36, 37.

part of the price, both being party to the fraud. The remainder, they brought to the apostles. But Peter rebuked Ananias who then fell dead at his feet; the same fate overtook his wife, three hours afterwards." It is undoubtedly a mistake to hold that Ananias and Sapphira violated a general and compulsory rule which they had pledged themselves to obey. Peter's rebuke to Ananias appears to be a refutation of the idea that a general rule was so violated: "While it remained, was it not thine own, and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power?" It was inexcusable hypocrisy to retain a part and yet pretend to surrender all. They lied to God and to the Holy Ghost. That was their sin. "They wished to serve two master, but to appear to serve only one" (Meyer). The punishment for their tempting God was swift and sure.

Commentators generally agree to the fact of the sudden death of these two, and admit that "a genuine tradition underlies the narrative." "As to the cause, whatever this may have been from a secondary point of view, there can be no doubt that in Acts it is traced to the deliberate will and intention of St. Peter."^v

Tempting the Lord is not only forbidden in the old scriptures,^w but the Savior reiterated the com-

^vActs 5:1-11.

^vScribner's "Dic. of the Bible," Vol. I, p. 91. Note carefully Acts 5:9, and

compare the similar case of St. Paul and Elymas in Acts 13:11.

^wEx. 17:2-7; Deut. 6:16.

mand to His tempter by declaring, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God;"^x and in the case under consideration the apostles taught effectively the same doctrine, the denouncement of hypocrisy, which Christ had so vigorously condemned in the Pharisees.

^xMatt. 4:7.

CHAPTER 15

THE GROWTH OF THE CHURCH IN JERUSALEM (Continued)

Teachings and Miracles Leading to the Spread of the Gospel.—In his methodical way, the author of Acts, after describing what happened to Ananias and Sapphira, proceeds to state, in a general way, that all the gifts, signs and wonders promised the believers were wrought among the people by the apostles. These manifestations caused that “believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.” The sick were brought forth into the streets and laid upon beds and couches, so that at least “the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them,” to their healing. The multitudes came not only from Jerusalem, but from the cities round about, “bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits; and they were healed every one.”^a

None can fail to note that the record bears testimony to the fulfilment of the promise that, after the reception of the Holy Ghost, the apostles were to be given power, with signs following, which should lead to the spread of the gospel.^b

Neither should men fail to note that this same power, with the signs, gifts, and wonders follow-

^aFor an example of similar power to heal the sick in our own day, see “History of the Church,” Vol. 4, pp.

3-5, note; also Woodruff’s “Leaves from My Journal,” Chapter 19.

^bMark 16:15-18.

ing, has been bestowed upon the apostles of Christ, direct from heaven, in our own day;^c and not only upon the apostles, but upon all obedient believers in the Lord Jesus Christ who comply, as did the apostles and Saints of old, with the stipulated conditions.^d

We believe that "these signs shall follow them that believe," and while the signs themselves, may not always be a proof of the truth, it is clear that the true Church of Christ will always be accompanied by them. The Saints today enjoy them, even as did the Saints in the days of Peter.

The Apostles Persecuted.—This progress of the ancient apostles, and the approval which they received in their ministrations among the people, filled the Sadducees with indignation. As a result the persecution which had incidentally broken out with the healing of the lame man, now became wilful and determined, and the high-priestly party took active measures to put down the growing Church.

The apostles were arrested and put in the common prison.^e On the next day, however, when the Sanhedrin were assembled, the prisoners were not to be found. An angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, liberated them, and commanded them boldly to resume their preaching in the tem-

^cDoc. and Cov. 20:41; 33:11-15; 35:6; 39:6, 23.

^dActs 2:37-39; Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; 3 Nephi 11:35,

36; 12:2; see also "History of the Church," Vol. 1, pp. 40-43, note.

^eActs 5:17, 18.

ple, which they did. This action plainly invited further conflict. When the council heard of it, they sent officers to get the apostles "without violence;" "for they feared the people lest they should have been stoned." The officers, perhaps, attributed their escape to treachery, for they were awed by the fearlessness as well as the popularity of these witnesses for Christ. The apostles, being brought before the council were upbraided for disobedience and sedition.^f It was then that Peter and the other apostles once more proclaimed their faith, in the ringing words that follow:

"We ought to obey God rather than man. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnessess of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey Him."^g

The rage of the rulers on hearing this was unbounded; they were "cut to the heart," and took counsel how they might put the men to death.

Gamaliel's Speech.—The fatal issue contemplated by the evil counsel, was prevented by a doctor of the law named Gamaliel. He was a leading Pharisee and Rabbi of his day, who seems to have exerted a great influence, owing to his personal reputation as well as to the fact that he represented the numerous and popular Pharisaic party. The Phar-

^fActs 5:28.

^gActs 5:29-32.

isees looked with indulgence on men who were strict observers of the law; they preached the resurrection of the dead; and, contrary to the Sadducees, represented a religious rather than a political movement.

While Gamaliel may have had no real sympathy with the views of the apostles, which he probably did not even understand, he was evidently in favor of fair play, and opposed to religious persecution. He cautioned the council to take heed what they should do to these men, and pointed out the fate of two other movements that had been inaugurated by Theudas, and by Judas of Galilee. Both of these men had been slain, evidently by the Romans, and their numerous followers dispersed. He then pleaded to let the apostles and their movement alone, for if "this work be of men, it will come to naught; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God."^h

"The speech of Gamaliel was a shrewd and timely argument. It was the speech of a politician and a philosopher. It held the Sadducees in check; it pleased the people; it showed some breadth of view; while it committed the speaker to nothing, and indicated no real interest on his part in the merits of the controversy."ⁱ

The Apostles Scourged and Let Go.—The council then agreed with Gamaliel's speech, it having

^hActs 5:33-40.

ⁱPurves "The Apostolic Age," p. 50:53.

turned the tide in favor of the apostles, who were now dismissed and let go; however, not without a severe beating, and a command that they "should not speak in the name of Jesus." This injunction, however, was not obeyed, for notwithstanding it and their shameful scourging, they departed "rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ."^j

The Pharisees.—Through Gamaliel we become somewhat interested in the Pharisees. But our sympathy with them will not last long, as we shall soon learn. Their anger against the apostles and their mission was soon aroused even to a greater degree than that of the Sadducees. It is no uncommon thing for false religious bodies to persecute the Church of Christ, even in our day, with greater severity than do organizations that have no religious belief at all. So in the case of the Pharisees and the ancient Church of Christ. In the meantime, we will be interested in what Josephus says of the Pharisees:

"Now for the Pharisees, they live meanly, and despise delicacies in diet; and they follow the conduct of reason; and what that prescribes to them as good for them they do; and they think they ought earnestly to strive to observe reason's dictates for practice. They also pay respects to such as are in years; nor are they so bold as to contradict them

^jActs 5:41, 42.

in anything which they have introduced; and while they determine that all things are done by fate, they do not take away the freedom from men of acting as they think fit; since their notion is, that it hath pleased God to make a temperament, whereby what He wills is done, but so that the will of man can act virtuously or viciously. They also believe that souls have an immortal vigor in them, and that under the earth there will be rewards or punishments, accordingly as they have lived virtuously or viciously in this life; and the latter are to be detained in an everlasting prison, but that the former shall have power to revive and live again; on account of which doctrines they are able to persuade the body of the people; and whatsoever they do about divine worship, prayers and sacrifices, they perform them according to their direction; in-somuch that the cities give their attestation to them on account of their entire virtuous conduct, both in the actions of their lives and their discourses also."^k

^k"Antiq. of the Jews," Book 18:1:3.

CHAPTER 16

THE GROWTH OF THE CHURCH IN JERUSALEM (Continued)

Reasons for Hatred Between Grecians and Hebrews.—A mere glimpse at the condition of the Jews, at this time, is not only very interesting, but will tend to explain the enmity that existed between the Greek Jews and the orthodox Jews at Jerusalem.

The Assyrian and Babylonian captivities had scattered Israel, who had long been removed, even as the Lord said they would be,^a "unto all the kingdoms of the earth." Generally they had been given full scope for their individual energies, in the countries to which they had been transplanted. They had, therefore, developed remarkable aptitude in trade, business and commerce, for which these scattered Jews were known in the apostles' day, and for which the Jews are noted even up to our own day.

Only few, comparatively, had returned to Jerusalem, under the permission of Cyrus, to rebuild their city and their temple. The remainder, though jealously regarding their baptisms, made their homes in many lands, where they had gradually multiplied until, as Josephus says,^b "the habitable earth is full of our nation." These were known as the "Jews of the Dispersion."^c

^aDeut. 28:25.

^b"Antiq. of the Jews," 15:7:2.

^cDeut. 28:25; Psalms 147:2; 2 Macc. 1:27; Ezra 6:16; John 7:35; James 1:1; Peter 1:1.

The contact of Greek and Jew^d was of momentous consequence to both races. Farrar points out^e that the effect on the Greek was less marked than on the Jew, and Judaism was more Hellenized by the contact than Hellenism was Judaized. The "Sons of Dispersion" totally lost their mother tongue, and, in the end, the Greek language was the means of the very preservation of the scriptures, the Greek became emphatically the language of the Christians. "In every considerable city of the Roman empire, the service of the synagogue was held in Greek, and these services were perfectly open to any one who liked to be present at them." "Multitudes of early converts had been Jewish proselytes before they became Christian disciples. They passed from the synagogues of the Hellenists (i. e., Grecian Jews) into the Church of Christ.

For many reasons there was a deep antagonism between the Orthodox Jews, who lived at Jerusalem, where it was possible to observe strictly the Levitical law, and the Hellenists, or Grecian Jews, and others of the Dispersion. The spirit of toleration for the pagan systems by which the Jews of the Dispersion were surrounded was "regarded by the stricter or orthodox Jews as an incipient revolt from Mosaism," and this they could not tolerate. Hence the feelings of antipathy between the Palestinian Jews and Grecians (Hellenists, or Grecian Jews) which rankled in the hearts of even the early

^dJohn 7:35

^e'Life and Works of St. Paul," Book 2:7.

Christians, the apostles and disciples of Christ—who were almost exclusively Hebrews. “Their feelings toward those who were Hellenists (Grecian Jews) in principles as well as in language, would be similar to that of other Jews, however, much it might be softened by Christian love.”^f Jealousies were on these accounts easily kindled, and it is entirely natural, therefore, that “when the number of disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews,”^g even in the Church of Christ at Jerusalem.

The Seven Wise Men Chosen.—The immediate cause of the murmurings of the Grecians against the Hebrews in the Church of Christ, arose from a real or fancied neglect of the widows of the Grecians. The Greeks considered that their widows were not as well cared for in the daily ministrations of supplies, as were those of the Jews.

That the apostles were not party to these partialities, if these really existed, is shown in the spirit of candor and generosity with which they met the complaints. They summoned the multitude of the disciples together, who were then told that it was not reasonable that the apostles should “leave the word of God and serve tables.” It was necessary, of course, that the membership should have careful temporal as well as spiritual attention, but it was even more essential that the apostles should be free to preach the word and add new converts to Christ.

^fFarrar “Life and Works of St. Paul,” Book 2:7.

^gActs 6:1.

They were to devote themselves "continually to prayer and the ministry of the word," a more serious and important duty—an injunction quite as applicable today as in the rise of the Church in ancient times. Hence, the splendid order and duties of the Aaronic Priesthood in our day, whose special mission is to serve the temporal wants of the Saints, leaving the apostles free to preach the word of the Lord, and attend to the spiritual wants of the community.

The apostles, therefore, counseled the gathered multitudes to choose from among the people seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, who were to take charge of the temporalities of the Church. This pleased the multitude, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Ghost, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte of Antioch. These were named to the apostles who, having first prayed, laid their hands on the Seven and set them apart for this business.^h Prayer and the laying on of hands had remained the true method ever afterwards in all ordinances to the Priesthood and in setting people apart to officiate in its offices. These seven men are sometimes named deacons, but they are not so called in the text of Acts, nor in the New Testament. There is good reason to believe that the Seven were not deacons, but were wise men chosen to meet the special condition which then existed in the Church of Jerusalem, pertaining to

^hActs 6:1-6.

the distribution of supplies to the people, who had "all things in common."

Some of these men, at least, certainly held a higher priesthood than the deacons of today hold, for Stephen rivaled the apostles in both deed and word, doing great wonders and miracles among the people;ⁱ while Philip preached Christ and baptized the Samaritans,^j the Ethiopian eunuch, in his return from Jerusalem,^k and preached "in all the cities till he came to Caesarea." Consequently, we conclude that the "Seven" were simply wise and faithful men chosen for the time being to look after the poor, and to relieve the apostles of temporal burdens and duties.

The Martyrdom of Stephen.—We have learned that the first to oppose the apostles were the Sadducees, who were the official hierarchy responsible to the Romans for the order of the country, for which reason they feared disturbances. Stephen, one of the Seven, who some commentators believe was a Hellenist, labored among the Greek-speaking Jews in Jerusalem. Owing to his faith and power, these Greek Jews, to show their enthusiasm for the Mosaic law, or, perhaps, because they had returned from various foreign parts to the sacred city and hence wished to be considered more orthodox—"were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake." They, therefore, brought the charge against Stephen, for the first time against a

ⁱActs 6:8.

^jActs 8:12.

^kActs 8:38.

disciple, of disloyalty to Judaism, and procured persons who were willing to take false oaths against him. Thus, by subornation, they obtained false witnesses who testified before the Sanhedrin that Stephen ceased not to speak blasphemous words against Moses, God, and the law.¹ The most active against them were the Libertines, who were mainly descendant's of the Jews taken to Rome by Pompey, B. C. 35, and there sold as slaves; the Cyrenians of North Africa, who are said to have been more Jewish than the Jews themselves; the Alexandrians, who lived in the city that was early the city of Jewish philosophy, beginning with Aristobulus^m and ending with Philo,ⁿ and a city which, in the second and third centuries of the Christian era, became the intellectual capital of Christendom; and then of Cilicia in Asia Minor.^o

As stated, these people of the synagogue in Jerusalem were instrumental in procuring false witnesses against Stephen who accused him of blasphemy against Moses and God. This was a new charge against a disciple of Christ, and the offense moved the religious, but heretofore tolerant, Pharisees to great anger, and deeply affected the feelings of the people to antagonism.

Stephen was arraigned before the council. The High Priest asked him if these things were so, if these accusations were true. His answer and defense were given in an address of great signifi-

¹Acts 6:8-15.

^mB. C. 160.

ⁿA. D. 40.

^oActs 6:9.

cance.^p This was so unconciliatory that it utterly failed to pacify the people. He closed his eloquent plea by this cutting declaration:

“Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart, and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it.”^q

When the people heard these things they were cut to the heart, gnashed their teeth on him, cried out in a loud voice, laid down their clothes at a young man’s feet whose name was Saul, stopped their ears, ran upon Stephen with one accord, cast him out of the city, and stoned him to death!

Meanwhile, being filled with the Holy Ghost, Stephen looked up steadily into heaven, saw the glory of God, and said, “Behold I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God.” While the stones were falling, he cried out, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” Then kneeling, he cried again with the true, forgiving, Christ-like spirit of the Master, in his heart. “Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this he fell asleep.”^r

The career of Stephen marked the beginning of

^pActs 7:1-53.

^qActs 7:51-53.

^rActs 7:54,60. Read Stephen’s glorious testimony,

Acts 7:51-55, 56; also Stephen’s accusation against the Jews, Acts 7:51-53.

a memorable epoch. Immense results followed from his preachings and ministrations, as well as from the persecution which followed his death. Next to the Master Himself, who gave His life that men might live, Stephen thus became the first Christian martyr.

A Modern Parallel.—That manifestations similar to St. Stephen's just described, were enjoyed by the founders of the restored Church of Christ, in our day is evidenced from the following account of the first conference of the Church of Latter-day Saints:

"On the 9th day of June, 1830, we held our first conference as an organized Church. Our numbers were about thirty, besides whom many assembled with us, who were either believers, or anxious to learn. Having opened by singing and prayer, we partook together of the emblems of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. We then proceeded to confirm several who had lately been baptized, after which we called out and ordained several to the various offices of the priesthood. Much exhortation and instruction was given, and the Holy Ghost was poured out upon us in a miraculous manner—many of our number prophesied, whilst others had the heavens opened to their view, and were so overcome that we had to lay them on beds, or other convenient places; among the rest was Brother Newel Knight, who had to be placed on a bed, being unable to help himself. By his own account of the transaction, he

could not understand why we should lay him on the bed, as he felt no sense of weakness. He felt his heart filled with love, and glory, and pleasure unspeakable, and could discern all that was going on in the room; when, all of a sudden, a vision of the future burst upon him. He saw there represented the great work which through my instrumentality was yet to be accomplished. He saw heaven opened, and beheld the Lord Jesus Christ, seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high, and had it made plain to his understanding that the time would come when he would be admitted into His presence, to enjoy His society forever and ever. When their bodily strength was restored to these brethren, they shouted hosannas to God and the Lamb, and rehearsed the glorious things which they had seen and felt, whilst they were yet in the spirit.

“Such scenes as these were calculated to inspire our hearts with joy unspeakable, and fill us with awe and reverence for that Almighty Being, by whose grace we had been called to be instrumental in bringing about, for the children of men, the enjoyment of such glorious blessings as were now at this time poured out upon us. To find ourselves engaged in the very same order of things as observed by the holy apostles of old! to realize the importance and solemnity of such proceedings; and to witness and feel with our own natural senses the like glorious manifestation of the power of the priesthood, the gifts and blessings of the Holy

Ghost, and the goodness and condescension of a merciful God unto such as obey the everlasting gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, combined to create within us sensations of rapturous gratitude, and inspire us with fresh zeal and energy in the cause of truth."^s

^s"History of the Church," Vol. I, pp. 84-86.

CHAPTER 17

THE GROWTH OF THE CHURCH IN JERUSALEM (Concluded)

Reflections on St. Stephen.—By this time, in the history of the Apostolic Church, quite a large number of the multitudinous body of priests of the Jewish faith in Jerusalem had joined the apostles who, with their followers, seemed to have been considered merely a sect^a in Judaism—the sect of the Nazarenes. To become a convert to the teachings of Christ did not, up to this time, involve rupture with Judaism, but, on the contrary, the acceptance of the message of Jesus seems to have been considered quite consistent with a true devotion to Jewish observances. The apostles and their followers, Galileans though they were, seem to have been in full communion with the doctrines of the Jews. for they “still lingered in the portals of the synagogue.”

So far, little had been said by them to indicate the separation that was to come about through the ministry of St. Stephen, the first martyr, “the learned Hellenist” (as Farrar and some other commentators would have us believe,) who thus suddenly, and for so short a day, came into the full light of history.

That the Mosaic law was to be superseded by the

^aActs 24:5; 28:22.

wider revelation of the gospel of Jesus Christ was not fully comprehended, either by Peter, the chief apostles, or by James, the brother of the Lord and writer of the first epistle, or by the Twelve in general, though the truth had often been preached by the Lord to His apostles who had "ears to hear," but seemingly heard not.^b

It remained for Stephen alone to be charged with utterances of a disloyal tendency against the tenets of Pharisaism, a proof of the foresight of his preaching, compared to that of the Twelve, and how much earlier he had arrived at the true appreciation of the words of Jesus respecting the extent and nature of His kingdom. "That which, in the mind of Peter, was still but a grain of mustard seed, sown in the soil of Judaism, had already grown, in the soul of a Stephen, a mighty tree.

* * * |It is probable that he himself can never have formed the remotest conception of the vast results—results among millions of Christians through centuries of progress—which in God's providence should rise from the first clear statement of those truths which he was the first to perceive. Had he done so, he would have been still more thankful for the ability with which he was inspired to support them, and for the holy courage which prevented him from quailing for an instant under the storm of violence and hatred which his words awoke."^c

^bMatt. 11:15; 13:15.

^cFarrar, "Life and Works of St. Paul," Book 2:8.

No wonder his speech roused the wrath of the Council.

Characteristics of St. Stephen's Speech.—The third persecution began when Stephen was brought before the Council to answer the seemingly regular formula of interrogation for transgressors, "Are these things so?" We are told that his face shone "as it had been the face of an angel." It was a sign and token that his work had the Lord's approval. In reply to that formal question of the High Priest Jonathan, which commentators would have us understand was the "Guilty, or not guilty?" of the Jewish supreme court, Stephen delivered the great and significant speech^d which stands out not only as one of the most forceful and interesting early documents of the Christian Church, but as one having far-reaching effect and most fruitful results. It consisted of a recital of Hebrew history from the call of the Father of the Faithful to the dedication of the temple of Solomon.

Farrar believes it was delivered in Greek. Because of the variety of languages in use at the time, it would be perfectly understood by the members of the Sanhedrin. Further, it was perhaps the only language which Stephen could speak with fluency. The quotation in it from the Old Testament follow the Septuagint translation, for which the world is indebted to the Hellenists. and it is believed he was a Hellenist, though that he was is not certain.

^dActs 7:1-53.

Stephen's speech marked a crisis in the annals of Christianity, changing the Church from a Judaic sect at Jerusalem into the Church of Christ, embracing not only the Jews, but the Gentiles of all the world. It marked the commencement of the separation of two institutions—Judaism and Christianity—"which had not yet discovered that they were mutually irreconcilable."

Peter's speech had been doctrinal and prophetic; Stephen's point of view was historical, rather than prophetic, and pointed out the fact that Christianity or the gospel of Christ was the intended goal of the whole history of the Hebrews. And that was true, for the gospel had been preached to Abraham. The children of Israel had early rejected it, and because of their stiffneckedness they were given the law of Moses instead. But the hour had now come when the gospel of Christ should take the place of the law of sacrifice. The teachings of Christ, heretofore so little comprehended,^e were working among the disciples toward a rupture with Judaism, and a new and more spiritual interpretation of the law of Moses. The crisis was brought about as had also been the case with Jesus, by the opposition which had come from the priestly authorities. Faith in Christ was the basis of the gospel, and from the beginning had been taught as the only way of salvation, and Stephen's speech made it clear that this involved more than a revived Jewish religion; it might mean the condemnation of Judaism, and a

^eMatt. 21:33-46; 23:34-36.

substitution of forms of service that involved the universal worship of Christ.^f

The Nazarenes Suppressed and Dispersed.—This third persecution which resulted in the martyrdom of Stephen, thoroughly aroused the Sanhedrin against the new sect of the Nazarenes, even by violence.

The death of Stephen was an act of violence, for, while we may infer^g that perhaps some form of law had been observed in his execution, there is nothing said of a decision or sentence. Their determination to kill him was formed in quick tumult and executed instantly, regardless of law. This is the only explanation of its occurrence, especially when we remember the fact that the Romans had taken from the Jews the right of capital punishment.^h It was determined that the new sect was to be violently suppressed. It will be remembered that Roman rule permitted the Sanhedrin to exercise extensive civil functions and, within certain limits, to regulate and enforce the religious laws of the nation. The offensive sect of the Nazarenes was now, therefore, proscribed; men andⁱ women were imprisoned and even put to death. One of the most active

^fFor Stephen's speech and further discussion see Talmage's "Jesus the Christ," chap. 38, "The Apostolic Ministry," pp. 709-12; Farrar's "Life and Works of St. Paul," Book 2, chap. 8; "Work and Martyrdom of

St. Stephen," Purves, "The Apostolic Age," v:55-59; Grieve's article, "Stephen," Vol. 4, p. 613; 'Scribner's Dictionary of the Bible.'

^gActs 7:58.

^hJohn 18:31.

ⁱActs 8:3; 22:4; 26:10, 11.

persecutors was the young Saul of Tarsus who had witnessed the martyrdom of Stephen, and at whose feet the witnesses had laid down their clothes while they did the awful sin of martyrdom. The result was that the great body of disciples fled from Jerusalem, scattering through Judea and Samaria, and many going much farther. However, the apostles still remained in Jerusalem, compelled doubtless to hide until the storm should blow over. Their remaining in the city would indicate that they regarded Jerusalem as still the center or headquarters of the Church.

The martyrdom and its attendant consequences marked the close of the first mission period of the apostles, whose hope of the speedy conversion of the Jewish nation as a whole to the gospel of Christ had now been extinguished. But from what had happened, they must have learned that their faith would conquer only through conflict, and that the Church of Christ must make its own way as a separate body independent of Judaism, bearing of itself its own precious and complete message to all mankind. The day of the world-expansion of Christianity had dawned. As the more extensive organization of Christianity had begun after the crucifixion of Christ, its author and founder, so the expansion of Christianity seems to have had its origin in the death of Stephen, its first martyr.

CHAPTER 18

REVIEW AND PREVIEW

The Growth of the Church in Jerusalem.—The martyrdom of Stephen marked the close of the first period of apostolic Christianity, the near end of the Apostolic Council. The persecution which followed caused the disciples to scatter in nearly all directions. It was really, however, the underlying cause of the universal growth of the Church, which was from now on to be founded in many other parts of the world. The universalist element which was inherent in the gospel of the Master was made definitely apparent in the teaching of the freer Hellenic spirit, in the person of St. Stephen, which so offended the devout and zealous Jews that they inaugurated the persecution which led naturally to a dispersion of the Christians and, consequently to the spread of Christianity.

The history of this first period is clearly set forth in the first seven chapters of the Acts:^a

The apostles went to Jerusalem in conformity with the promise of the risen Lord to await the endowment of the Spirit.

In the meantime, during the ten days' waiting, they filled the quorum of Twelve by selecting Matthias one of their number.

Then came the feast of Pentecost, and the promised outpouring of Spirit which was followed by

^aActs 1 to 7:3.

the Pentecostal speech of Peter.^b At this time he made the first use of the keys committed to him,^c and opened the door of Christian opportunity by proclaiming the first principles of the gospel to Israel, and declaring the resurrected Jesus Christ, to be the Messiah. This message was later to be given by him, through a second use of the keys, to the Gentiles.^d

His preaching was followed by a great increase of converts. The healing of the impotent man, the first apostolic miracle, gave Peter a second opportunity to cry repentance to Israel, and to declare unto them that the covenant would be fulfilled; as a result five thousand believed.^e

It also brought about the first persecution, which came from the Sadducees, who feared disturbances because they were the official hierarchy, and responsible to the Romans for the order of the country.

The apostles were arrested and brought before the Sanhedrin where Peter again bore record of the Christ, and of the power and virtue of His name. This, like all his other speeches, showed clearly the doctrinal development of the gospel. The apostles were asked but refused to obey the Sanhedrin which forbade them to preach in the name of Jesus; the apostles' answer was: "We can not but speak the things we have seen and heard."

Following came the prayer of the Church and

^bActs 2.

^cMatt. 16:18, 19.

^dActs 10:1-48.

^eActs 4:4.

the second enduement of the Spirit;^f the sin of Ananias and Sapphira; and many signs, healings and wonders were wrought by the hands of the apostles, and multitudes were added to the Church.^g

In a second persecution, under the Sadducees, the apostles were delivered from prison by an angel, and again stood before the council and would have suffered punishment but for the timely counsel of Gamaliel. They were now beaten and let go, but they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.^h

The "Seven" were now chosen, by the laying on of hands, to look after the poor; and the third persecution, this being by the Pharisees, brought Stephen before the council accused of preaching that Jesus shall destroy the temple and change the customs delivered to Israel by Moses. The answer of Stephen is a historical rather than a prophetic review of Israel, showing how all their history had pointed to the coming of that day, and that the gospel of Christ was the intended goal of the whole history of the Hebrews. His cutting arraignment of the Jews' outward forms so enraged the people that they stoned Stephen to death. He died as the first martyr of the Church, and called out in the true spirit of Christ: "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."

Saul, of whom we are now about to learn more, consented to Stephen's death, and made havoc among the Church, arresting and imprisoning men

^fActs 4:23-31.

^gActs 5:1-16.

^hActs 5:17-42.

and women. "There was great persecution against the Church at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles."ⁱ

And so closed the first mission period of the apostles.

Important Speeches and Passages.—In the text, so far considered, there are a number of speeches and passages of scripture that should be at the tongue's end of every student. For convenience these are named:

Speeches:

1. Peter's speech on the selection of Matthias.^j
2. Peter's Sermon at Pentecost. Theme, "Jesus is Lord and Christ."^k
3. Peter's Sermon on the occasion of the healing of the lame man. Theme, "The covenants will be fulfilled."^l
4. Peter's address to the Sanhedrin, answering the question, "By what power or by what name have ye done this?"^m
5. The answer of the apostles to the Sanhedrin's command that they should not teach in Jesus' name.ⁿ
6. The historical address of Stephen before the Council in answer to the charge that he had said "that this Jesus of Nazareth shall de-

ⁱActs 8:1-3.

^jActs 1:15-22.

^kActs 2:14-40.

^lActs 3:12-26.

^mActs 4:8-12.

ⁿActs 5:29-32.

stroy this place and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us.”^o

Passages to be Learned:

1. The Apostolic Commission.^p
2. Promise of Jesus' return to earth.^q
3. What men must do to be saved.^r
4. Peter's answer to the lame man who asked for alms.^s
5. Peter's call to repentance, when he declared that God had fulfilled in Christ what had been promised through the mouths of the prophets.^t
6. Christ the stone set at naught by the builders, in whom only there is salvation.^u
7. Peter and John's answer when forbidden to speak or teach in Jesus' name.^v
8. The prayer of the Church members at the second enduement.^w
9. The healing of the sick.^x
10. Peter and the other apostles' answer, on their second appearance before the Sanhedrin.^y
11. Stephen's denunciation of the Jewish council.^z
12. Stephen beholds the Lord Jesus.^a
13. Last words of Stephen.^b

Preview of the Second Period.—The second

^oActs 7:2-53.

^pActs 1:8, 9; see also Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-18; Luke 24:47, 48; John 20:21-23.

^qActs 1:10, 11.

^rActs 2:38, 39

^sActs 3:68.

^tActs 3:19-21.

^uActs 4:10-12.

^vActs 4:19, 20.

^wActs 4:24-31.

^xActs 5:14, 15, 16.

^yActs 5:29-32.

^zActs 7:51-53.

^aActs 7:55, 56.

^bActs 7:59, 60.

great division of the Acts is marked by chapters 8:4 to 13:3, which treat of the early expansion of the Church, and describe the transition from Jewish to Gentile Christianity, inaugurated by the labors and martyrdom of Stephen, and supplemented by the work of Philip, Paul, and Peter. The early conversion of Paul is recounted in Acts 22:1-21 and 26:1-23, in his addresses there given; and further light on these same events is found in Galatians 1:13-24, also I Cor. 9:1 and 15:8; see also 2 Cor. 11:24; 12:9.

For convenience in study we may name the divisions of this period, as found in the record: (1) The ministry of Philip, one of the "Seven;"^c (2) The conversion of Saul and his early work which resulted in his power to thenceforth proclaim the faith;^d (3) The labors of Peter in Syria, his miracles and ministrations, in which he made a second use of the keys^e to give the gospel to the Gentiles, the first gift having been to the Jews who rejected it. The conversion of Cornelius demonstrated this fact that God would accept uncircumcised believers;^f (4) The rise of Gentile Christianity in Antioch, providing a new center for the now rapidly expanding religion;^g (5) The Fifth or Herodian persecution in which the Jewish state utterly rejected the gospel.^h

^cActs 8:4-40.

^dActs 9:1-30.

^eMatt. 16:19; Acts 2:14-41.

^fActs 9:31 to 11:18.

^gActs 11:10-30.

^hActs 12.

CHAPTER 19

EXPANSION OF THE CHURCH IN JUDEA AND SAMARIA

The Disciples Scattered.—As the disciples of Christ were scattered abroad, after the fourth persecution of the Church in Jerusalem, under Saul, the chief persecutor, they “went everywhere preaching the word.”^a Regarding themselves as missionaries of Jesus Christ, they were the means of promulgating the gospel with great aggressiveness, in widespread areas. Their influence and message permeated at first especially Judea and in Jerusalem, and they, too, were soon to be called away from the holy city, as the expansion of the Church progressed.

Philip in Samaria.—Acting in the spirit of Stepen, the first martyr, Philip, one of the “Seven,” continued the work by going down to the city of Samaria and preaching Christ unto them.^c

Philip is called the evangelist, in Acts 21:8, but it is well to state here that this title has not the same meaning with us, but is evidently used, in his case, as referring to one who is a traveling teacher gone forth with the message to prepare the way. In the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, evangelist is equivalent to patriarch, an

^aActs 8:4.

^cActs 8:5; 6:5; 21:8.

^bActs 8:1.

office implying the possession of the higher Priesthood. Philip, though empowered to baptize, and for that reason, perhaps a Priest, could not have held the higher Priesthood, since, as we shall learn, he did not bestow the Holy Ghost upon his converts.

In the "History of the Church," Vol. 3, p. 381, it is recorded as an utterance of the Prophet Joseph: "An evangelist is a Patriarch, even the oldest man of the blood of Joseph or of the seed of Abraham." In a foot note of the Doctrine and Covenants,^d we are informed that "evangelical ministers" are "patriarchs."

The city of Samaria, or Sebaste, as Herod the great had called it, located some thirty or forty miles from Jerusalem, contained a liberal pagan population brought there from Babylonia, as well as a large number of Samaritans. The Samaritans were considered by the Jews as aliens by descent^e as well as in religion.^f For this reason we may consider Philip the forerunner of Paul, not only in missionary zeal, but also and particularly in the opening of the door of the Church to non-Jewish believers. It must be borne in mind, however, that the Samaritans were of partial Hebrew descent, being remnants of the ten tribes that had not been carried out of the country when conquered. They had a strong mixture of Jewish blood in their veins. They were also partial believers in Juda-

^dDoc. and Cov. 107:39.

^fJohn 4:22.

^eLuke 17:18.

ism, and hence offered the most natural field for proselyting of any outside of Judea and Galilee. The Samaritans observed the law of Moses, practiced circumcision, and, like the Jews looked forward with expectation to the coming of the Messiah. And yet notwithstanding all this, they were rigidly excluded from the Jewish Church, and were denied the privilege of becoming proselytes—a privilege accorded even to the heathens. The Jews despised them because of their impure nationality, and doubtless also because they had from early times bowed down to heathen gods.^g

The presence of Philip, therefore, among these people preaching Christ to them, indicated that, in a measure, at least, he was free from the Jewish prejudice which so strongly refused any dealings with the Samaritans.^h Philip preached the gospel of Christ to them, administered baptism to them, and performed miracles in their midst. In his labors, conduct and actions, in this connection, we may clearly trace the effect of the teachings of Jesusⁱ concerning the good Samaritan; His commendation of the stranger in the healing of the ten lepers;^j the teachings to the woman of Samaria, at the well,^k and His prediction that His disciples should be witnesses of Him “in all Judea and in Samaria.”^l

The people of Samaria gave heed to Philip's

^g2 Kings 23:5. 19,20.

^hJohn 4:9.

ⁱLuke 10:30-37.

^jLuke 17:11-19.

^kJohn 4.

^lActs 1:8.

words, both hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. He not only baptized them, but performed many miracles among them, in which the gifts of the Gospel were made manifest."^m There was great joy among the people, for "unclean spirits, crying with loud voice came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed."ⁿ Hence the joy that was awakened among Philip's converts, and the success which he met in preaching and baptizing, as well as the pleasure felt by the apostles at Jerusalem when it was reported to them that Samaria had received the word of God. The faith in Christ soon spread also into many adjacent villages of the Samaritans.

Simon Magus, the Sorcerer.—Through the perfidy of a man named Simon Magus, the first heretic, the religion of Christ was, for the first time, to be confronted with imposture. Superstition and imposture, often strangely united with philosophy in affairs religious, were very common in the ancient world and especially in the Orient. Samaria was a land in which a mixed or bastard Judaism came in contact with the old Syrian and Phoenician religions, as well as the newer Hellenic paganism. All these different elements, we are told in history, were observable as present in the system of sorcery practiced by him. For a long time the inhabitants of Samaria had been under the influence of this

^mMark 16:15-18.

ⁿActs 8:5-8.

man Simon, whose sorceries had long bewitched the people, from the least to the greatest, and they regarded him as the "great power of God."^o

When, by reason of Philip's preaching, the people believed and were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, Simon also was baptized. He continued with Philip, and, beholding the miracles and signs which were done, he greatly wondered.^p He evidently submitted to the ordinance because of his interest in the miracles from which he doubtless hoped to get financial gain; and not as a result of faith in Christ and repentance of sin which must abide in every heart before baptism can be effectively performed and the convert become a true member of the Church of Christ.

Hearing of the conversions in Samaria, the apostles in Jerusalem sent thither Peter and John to confirm the new converts members of the Church; for Philip, while he had the power to baptize, evidently was not authorized to perform the sacred ordinance of conferring the Holy Ghost.

The people had faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, they had repented, and had been baptized, but as yet the Holy Ghost had not been received by them.

When Peter and John, the apostles, who possessed this authority came, they prayed for them, laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Ghost,^q thus fulfilling the established order by obeying the first principles of the Gospel with which it

^oActs 8:10.

^pActs 8:13.

^qActs 8:13-17.

is necessary for all to comply to become members of the Church of Christ.

Now when Simon saw the power which the apostles had to confer the Holy Ghost, by the laying on of hands, he offered them money saying, "Give me also this power."^r Peter understanding the deep sin of the request, sternly rebuked him:

"Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.

"Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God.

"Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perchance the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.

"For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity."^s

Simon, not having honestly observed the first two principles of the gospel—faith and repentance—recognizing the sting of Peter's rebuke and, in apparent humility, pleaded with the apostles: "Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me."^t He saw the enormity of his sin in endeavoring to obtain spiritual gifts and preferment by bribe, from which we have the word simony, which all good people so despise and shun.

What became of Simon thereafter is legendary and conjectural. Justin Martyr, from whose writ-

^rActs 8:18-19.

^tActs 8:24.

^sActs 8:20-23.

ings most of our later knowledge of Simon comes, looked upon him as the source of heresy, from whence all later heresies were derived." Some have declared that the legend of "Faust" is based on Simon, and Helena, a woman with whom he associated in his travels and work.

Philip Baptizes the Ethiopian Eunuch in Judea.—

On "the way that goeth down from Jerusalem into Gaza, which is desert," Philip traveled from Samaria, in compliance with the voice of an angel who appeared to him for Philip was thus guided by inspiration, even as the elders are in our day."^v

It will thus be seen that his ministry was not confined to Samaria but included also Southern Judea. On his way, he met an Ethiopian, a man of great authority under Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, and who had charge of all her treasure. He was evidently a proselyte, and had come to Jerusalem to worship, being a devout believer in Jehovah; although, because of his being a eunuch, it is possible he could not have been a recognized member of the congregation of Israel.^w But he was deeply interested in the prophecies of the Holy Scripture. "He is a fine example," Pures^x declares, "of the way in which the religion of Israel had touched the souls of many in the pagan world

^vSee A. C. Headlam's article, Simon Magus, "Scribner's Dictionary of the Bible," Vol. 4, pp. 520-527.

^vSee Woodruff's "Leaves from My Journal," chapters 23, 24, 26, 27.

^wDeut. 23:1.

^x"Apostolic Age," 11:68.

and prepared them for a further message from God."

Philip, acting under the directing whisperings of the Spirit, approached the Ethiopian who was reading passages in Isaiah the prophet.³ These passages were read to introduce the knowledge of Jesus. The incident illustrates, also, as pointed out by commentators the means adopted by the earlier disciples to introduce the knowledge of Christ to their converts through the old scriptures, so that they might the more easily comprehend the message and mission of the Messiah, the Maker of the new.

The eunuch asked Philip of whom the prophet spoke—whether of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip took advantage of the opportunity, began with the same scripture and preached unto him Jesus—faith in Jesus, repentance of sin, baptism, to be followed by the imposition of hands by those having authority for the reception of the Holy Ghost. Evidently the eunuch had faith and repented, for he asked for baptism as they came to a certain water.² Philip told him that if he believed with all his heart, he might be baptized. The eunuch declared: "I believe that Jesus is the Son of God." Then both Philip and the eunuch "went down into the water," and Philip baptized him. Incidentally, the mode of baptism is here made plain. The words leave no doubt that immersion was the form

³Acts 8:32, 33; Isaiah 53:7,8.

²Acts 8:36-39.

employed in this case—they both “went down into,” and “came up out of, the water.”^a

It is interesting to note in this incident of baptism, the widening destiny of the gospel, both in geographical and ethnological expansion. By Philip’s baptism of the eunuch, he had not only admitted unto the Church one whom Moses had excluded from the congregations of Israel, but had marked an important stage in the admission of Gentiles to the Church of Christ. His conduct in this matter exemplifies three important points: trustful obedience to divine leadings,^b alertness in availing himself of opportunity to do missionary work,^c and broad-minded disregard of national, race, and religious prejudice.

Philip’s Further Ministry.—After the baptism of the Ethiopian, the Lord caught Philip away, and he was later found in Azotus, the site of Ashdod, one of the five great Philistine cities.^d He passed through and preached in all the cities till he came to Caesarea, near Jaffa, on the sea shore where he seems to have settled. It was here that Luke and Paul, much later found him and were his guests;^e and where the author of the Acts may have received from the evangelist’s own lips the facts and incidents of his ministry, which were incorporated in

^aFor further confirmation on immersion as the mode of baptism practiced in the days of Christ, and by the early disciples, see Matt. 3:16; Mark 1:5, 9, 10; John

3:23; Rom. 6:4, 5; Col. 2:12.

^bActs 8:26.

^cActs 8:30.

^dI Mac. 10:83.

^eActs 21:8.

Luke's record. When the revolt which developed into the great Jewish war broke out at Caesarea, in A. D. 65, it is probable that Philip, like other Jewish Christians, would leave before the fatal issue. Tradition has it that he then settled elsewhere, continuing to live with his four daughters who had devoted their virgin lives to the service of the gospel, in anxious anticipation of the coming of the gospel. According to most forms of the tradition, Philip died a natural death at Tralles, in Asia Minor, near Ephesus, but a Greek authority represents that he suffered martyrdom there.

CHAPTER 20

EXPANSION OF THE CHURCH IN JUDEA AND SAMARIA (Continued)

The Gospel is Brought to "Strange Cities."—While Luke thus gives us a glimpse of the work of Philip in Samaria and Judea, it seems clear that one of the principal regions in which large numbers of the disciples of Christ found refuge, was in the northern parts of Syria, where the faith was widely diffused. Both on the coast of the Mediterranean and in the towns of the interior, the persecution^a had sent the Saints even into "strange cities." Jews resided in these places in large numbers. It is certain that Damascus had received the gospel, for it was to that most ancient city that the main persecutor, Saul turned his footsteps to punish, imprison, and raise his voice against them. In Antioch, then the great Syrian metropolis the Saints were also settled. We find Peter visiting the disciples^b in Lydda and Joppa, indicating that the faith had been well established in those regions. Hellenistic missionaries had previously been to Phoenicia and even to Cyprus, preaching the Lord Jesus.^c While these labors extended over a number of years, they were all a part of the expansion which followed the death of Stephen, and every indication points to Syria as the region largely occupied by the refugees. It is

^aActs 26:11.

^bActs 10:32.

^cActs 11:19, 20.

even believed by some that Egypt, Babylonia and Arabia, where many Jews dwelt who doubtless were in close touch with Jerusalem and all Judea, must have heard the gospel through refugees and perhaps through direct communication with the headquarters of the apostles. Of this, however, there is no scriptural information.

Aside from Philip's work, it should be remembered, however, that the proselyting by which great numbers believed and turned unto the Lord,^d was confined to the Jews, the word being preached "to none but unto the Jews only."^e The faith was that which had been preached in Jerusalem, under the direction, guidance and testimony of the apostles whose authority was acknowledged in all the dispersion.

Conversion of Saul.—It cannot be stated how long the fourth persecution lasted. In Acts 9:31, we have the first intimation of its cessation, but the date cannot be fixed. In the meantime, however, an event of supreme importance took place in the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, the main instigator of the persecution, who, some years before, had stood by watching and consenting to the death of Stephen. He was still breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, when he went to the high priests in Jerusalem and asked for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, that he might have authority to bring any of the

^dActs 11:21.

^eActs 11:19.

disciples of Christ, whether men or women, bound to Jerusalem.^f While on his way, on this errand, having evidently received his authority from the priest, a marvelous incident happened by which Saul was converted to become a disciple of Jesus whose followers he was persecuting.

Damascus was a very old Hittite and Syrian city, highly praised in ancient days^g and in more modern times called "the eye of the desert," "the paradise of earth," and "the pearl of the orient." It has retained a certain importance through all the periods of history from Abraham to our own day. It became prominent in 1860 by a massacre of Christians. Damascus has a population at present of from one hundred to one hundred and fifty thousand.

As Paul was nearing this city, a light from heaven suddenly shone about him. It caused him to fall to the earth, and while so fallen he heard a voice saying unto him "Saul, Saul why persecutest thou me?"

Saul in his fear was yet able to say: "Who art thou, Lord?"

And the answer came, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks."

Then, trembling and astonished, Saul asked, "Lord, what wilt thou have me do?"

The Lord made answer: "Arise and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do."

^fActs 9.

^gGen. 14:15; 15:2.

While this was happening, the men who were with Saul stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no person. Saul rose from the earth and when he opened his eyes he found he could not see; he was blind! They led him then to Damascus where he remained in darkness without food or drink, for three days.

In the meantime there was a Jewish Christian named Ananias, to whom the Lord appeared in a vision, and commanded him to go into the street called Straight and inquire in the house of Judas for Saul of Tarsus, who was praying, and who had been shown Ananias in a vision, coming in and putting his hand on him that he might receive his sight. Ananias, who had heard of Saul's evil work of persecution among the Saints in Jerusalem, and of his authority from the priest to bind all who called upon the name of the Lord, objected to going on that account. "But the Lord said, Go thy way, for he is a chosen vessel unto me to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: for I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake."

Ananias went, and laid his hands on Saul, saying, "Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost." The scales fell from the eyes of Saul, and he received his sight immediately. He believed in the Lord Jesus, repented of his sins and evil doings, was baptized, and was filled with

the Holy Ghost following the laying on of hands by Ananias.

After being with the disciples at Damascus for certain days, we do not know how long, evidently that he might more fully comprehend and learn the principles of the gospel, Saul began preaching "Christ in the synagogues that he is the Son of God."^h

For some time Saul continued to preach in Damascus, and "after many days," the Jews there, under the governor, by direction of Aretas, the king, took counsel to kill him, but he escaped from his enemies by being let down by the wall in a basket.ⁱ He was then taken by the self-sacrificing Barnabas^j to Jerusalem, where the apostles at first feared Saul, thinking he was not a disciple. Barnabas then explained to them how Saul had seen the Lord, spoken to Him, and how he had preached boldly in Damascus. This satisfied them, for Saul then remained in Jerusalem, coming in and going out with the apostles, learning the details of the gospel message more and more direct from them, and speaking boldly in the name of Jesus. Disputing with the Hellenists, or Grecian Jews, who had so persecuted Stephen, he was like to be slain by them. The brethren learning of this brought him to Caesarea and later sent him to Tarsus, the city of his birth.

Period of Rest from Persecution.—Following the

^hActs 9:1-20; 22:1-16; 29:9-18.

^jActs 4: 36, 37.

ⁱActs 9:23-25.

conversion and exile of Saul, we are told in the record that the churches through Judea, Galilee and Samaria had a period of rest from persecution. How many years this lasted we are not informed. But, during this time, the members were greatly edified, and multiplied, walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost.^k

Peter's Ministry in Lydda and Joppa.—The apostles traveled from place to place superintending the churches, edifying the Saints, teaching them the word of the Lord, and officiating in the ordinances of the gospel, and at the same time bearing witness of Jesus to the converting of many to the Lord.

Peter especially passed through all quarters. On one occasion he came to Lydda, where, in the name of Jesus Christ, he healed Aeneas, who had suffered from palsy for eight years. "And all that dwelt at Lydda and Saron saw him, and turned to the Lord."^l

On another occasion he raised Tabitha, a disciple at Joppa, from the dead, through his faith and prayer, through which many believed in the Lord, for the miracle was known throughout all Joppa. Peter tarried in this city for many days with one Simon, a tanner.^m

It was while Peter resided here that he had a vision which converted him to the fact that the gospel was not alone to the Jews who conformed to the ritual law, but it was for the Gentiles as

^kActs 9:31.

^mActs 9:36-43.

^lActs 9:32-35.

well to whom God had granted repentance unto life,ⁿ and that in accepting the gospel they were to be free by the grace of God from the forms of the law.^o We shall see that through the lesson of this vision Peter soon made a second use of the keys of power bestowed upon him to open the gospel door also to the Gentiles.

ⁿActs 11:18.

^oActs 15:7-11; Gal. 2:7, 8.

CHAPTER 21

EXPANSION OF THE CHURCH IN JUDEA AND SAMARIA (Continued)

The Gospel Door Opened to the Gentiles.—While Peter was yet staying with Simon the Tanner in Joppa, he was one day praying, when he fell into a trance, and beheld a vision. This vision was given to him that he might be led to understand that the Gospel of Jesus Christ was not only for the Jews but for all who would believe and be baptized. The apostles were still loyal to the temple and the Moscaic law. While a charge of disloyalty had been brought against Stephen,^a the disciples as a body had not yet changed their attitude to the national worship. The vision of Peter led finally to their separation from the synagogues, and to the further organization of the disciples of Christ into a community of their own. It broadened the view of the apostles, and caused Peter and his fellow laborers clearly to perceive that "God is no respecter of persons," and that all who believe in the name of Christ, observing His commandments, "in Him shall receive remission of sins."

The student should notice that, while indications of this result had been shown in the work of Stephen as well as in the ministry of Philip, no definite action was taken until the head of the Church was, by means of this vision, constrained to

^aActs 6:13.

use the keys of his power and authority^b to open the doors of the gospel to the Gentiles.

The Conversion of Cornelius, the First Gentile Convert.—The person who was to be the first Gentile convert, to be admitted into the Church, was Cornelius, who was probably an Italian.

He was a centurion in the Italian band, or cohort, of the Roman garrison at Caesarea, a city some thirty-seven miles north of Joppa on the sea coast, and the headquarters of the Roman procurator. A centurion is described as an officer in the Roman army in command of a century, (*centuria*) consisting of men numbering from 50 to 100, according to the size of the legion of which it was a subdivision.

From the circumstances of the narrative^c it is evident that he had been deeply impressed with the religion of the people among whom he was serving; but it is also true, from the fact it was necessary that Peter should receive such a vision, that he had not become a proselyte, as was the eunuch, whom Philip baptized. It seems clear also that Cornelius was not satisfied with the measure of light which he had received from Judaism. He was devout and feared God, gave much alms, and prayed always. This man Cornelius, in answer to his faithfulness and prayers, had a vision, in which an angel appeared to him and told him his prayers were answered, and commanded him to send men to Joppa

^bMatt. 16:19; Acts 2:14-41.

^cActs 10:1-48.

to call upon Simon Peter, who would then tell him further what to do.

Cornelius obeyed, and called two of his household servants, and one soldier of those who waited on him continually, and sent them down the coast to Joppa, a noted seaport of the Mediterranean, thirty-three miles northwest of Jerusalem.

Peter's Vision.—As these messengers of Cornelius drew near to Joppa, Peter went up on the housetop to pray:

“He became very hungry and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance, and saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: Wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord, for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.”^d

After this had been repeated three times, the vessel was received up again into heaven. While Peter was wondering what this should mean, the messengers of Cornelius stood before the gate of Simon's house asking for Peter.

Peter was told by the spirit of their presence, and

^dActs 10:10-15.

to go to them doubting nothing, for God had sent them.

He made himself known to the messengers who related Cornelius' vision, and stated that they had been sent to him for further instructions. The next day Peter and certain brethren of Joppa accompanied them on their return to Caesarea.

Cornelius had called together his kinsmen and near friends, and when Peter appeared, Cornelius met him, fell down at his feet and worshiped him. Peter commanded: "Stand up; I myself also am a man." Peter next met those who were gathered in the house, and said to them:

"Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. Therefore came I unto you without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me?"

Cornelius answered the question by relating to Peter the vision of the angel, and told him they were all present "before God to hear things that are commanded thee of God."

Peter's Speech to the Gentiles on Salvation Through Faith.—In the house of Cornelius, Peter then delivered his famous speech to the Gentiles on salvation through faith.^e As he was speaking the Holy Ghost fell on all who heard the word. Those

^eActs 10:34-43; compare Acts 2:14-41.

who came with Peter, who were devout Jews of the circumcision, were astonished because the gift of the Holy Ghost was poured out upon the Gentiles. Their wonder arose from the fact that they heard the believing Gentiles speak with tongues, and magnify God.

Peter, in answer, exclaimed: "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?"

Then he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.^f

The Holy Ghost and the Gift of the Holy Ghost.—Through this outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon the people prior to baptism, which is a reversal of the order heretofore observed, many have argued that a new order was inaugurated. Instead of the Holy Ghost being bestowed as before upon believing Jews by the imposition of hands, through apostolic mediation after baptism, this occasion was a turning point which introduced the normal order for all time to follow, in which the Holy Ghost is granted without delay to the believer, Jew and Gentile alike, and upon no condition or mediation whatever, except simple faith in Jesus Christ. With few exceptions, other than the Catholics and Episcopalians, most of the Christian churches in our day hold to this view. The Latter-day Saints declare that this view is incorrect, and that those who have lost sight of this important ordinance of the laying on of hands for imparting the Holy Ghost after bap-

^fActs 10:44-48.

tism, have not continued in the doctrine of Christ, nor in the teaching of His apostles, as declared in the early rise of the Church.^g

The normal order, as borne out by the scriptures, is faith, repentance, baptism, the reception of the Holy Ghost. It is very clear that the reason for deviating from the regular order, in the case of Cornelius, was that Peter and the Jews generally might have a witness from the Lord that the gospel was for the Gentiles as well as for their own nation. In the nature of things, also, the body of man is not a fit abiding place for the Holy Ghost until man, through faith, has repented of his sins, been baptized for the remission of them, and so cleansed his temple^h that it may be a fit abiding place for the Holy Ghost.

In a sermon of the Prophet Joseph Smith delivered Sunday, March 20, 1842,ⁱ we have light upon this subject:

“There are certain key words and signs belonging to the Priesthood which must be observed in order to obtain the blessing. The sign of Peter was to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins, with the promise of the gift of the Holy Ghost; and in no other way is the gift of the Holy Ghost obtained.

“There is a difference between the Holy Ghost

^gJohn 3:5; Mark 1:7, 8; John 1:32-34; Acts 2:28, 39; 8:14, 15; 5:24-32; 19:1-6; 2 Tim. 1:6; Heb. 6:1, 2; Doc. and Cov. 49:11-14.

^hI Cor. 3:16, 17.

ⁱ“History of the Church,” Vol. 4, p. 555.

and the gift of the Holy Ghost. Cornelius received the Holy Ghost before he was baptized, which was the convincing power of God unto him of the truth of the Gospel, but he could not receive the gift of the Holy Ghost until after he was baptized. Had he not taken this sign or ordinance upon him, the Holy Ghost, who convinced him of the truth of God, would have left him. Until he obeyed these ordinances and received the gift of the Holy Ghost, by the laying on of hands, according to the order of God, he could not have healed the sick or commanded an evil spirit to come out of a man, and it obey him; for the spirits might say unto him, as they did the sons of Sceva: 'Paul we know, and Jesus we know, but who are ye?' It mattereth not whether we live long or short on the earth after we have come to a knowledge of these principles and obey them unto the end. I know that all men will be damned if they do not come in the way which He hath opened, and this is the way marked out by the word of the Lord."

Peter's Action Discussed at Jerusalem.—When Peter returned to Jerusalem, and the apostles and brethren heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God, those who were believers in the idea that the Gospel was only for the Jews, contended with him. They chided him with having associated and eaten with men who were uncircumcised. It was then that Peter rehearsed the whole situation to them, in another speech,^j which is a

^jActs 11:5-17.

marvel of condensation. It closes with the following words which are a proof of our contention that it needed the bestowal of the Holy Ghost upon the Gentiles to convince Peter that they were also "granted repentance unto life:"

"Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as He did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?"

When the apostles heard his argument, they were at least partially convinced that he was right, for the record declares that they "Held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life."^k

^kActs 11:18.

CHAPTER 22

THE CHURCH AT ANTIOCH

Rise of the Church in Antioch.—We have mentioned before that under the persecution which arose after the death of Stephen, the disciples who were scattered abroad went also to Antioch, so that, outside of Jerusalem, this city was among the earliest and most influential seats of the teaching of our Savior. It was in this city that those who were driven out of Jerusalem, some of them Jews from Cyprus and Cyrene, preached the Lord Jesus to the Grecians.^a The best authorities agree that, while Grecians, in Acts 11:20, may mean Hellenists or Grecian Jews, the preaching certainly proceeded among the non-Jewish population also, and that with much success; for there was a large community of believers in Antioch who were composed mainly of uncircumcised foreigners who mingled with the believing Jews on terms of equality. The hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned unto the Lord.

Antioch.—The city of Antioch is located, as one may see from the map, on the Orontes. This is the chief river in northern Syria which rises between Lebanon and Anti Lebanon, flows some 250 miles past Antioch and empties into the Mediterranean about latitude 36° north. The ancient city was lo-

^aActs 11:20.

cated about fifteen miles from the sea and was of great importance compared with the present unimportant modern town, Antakia, which has a population of about 12,000. It was founded about 300 years B. C., and was the capital of Syria until about 65 B. C. It rose to great splendor, and was called "The Crown of the East," and frequently, "Antioch the Beautiful." During the early Roman empire it was a famous commercial center and, after Rome and Alexandria, the most important center of the Empire. Being crowded with a mixed population bent upon trade with cities both east, towards the cities of the desert, and west, to the Graeco-Roman world, it was a specially favorable and important place for the faith to be carried by report in every direction. Not far from Palestine, it could, at the same time, remain in touch with the Church where the Twelve were seater in Jerusalem.

How long after the death of Stephen the missionary work began in Antioch, is not recorded. Neither do we know how long it continued before it attracted the attention of the apostles in Jerusalem. It may have been a year or two before the fifth, or the Herodian, persecution that "these things came unto the ears of the Church^b which was in Jerusalem."

Barnabas is Sent to Antioch.—When the tidings of this great work in Antioch became generally known to the Church in Jerusalem, Barnabas was

^bActs 11:22; 12:1.

sent by the apostles on a mission north as far as Antioch to look after the interests of the converts. This shows that the central Church, as was proper, held authority over the churches in their scattered condition. Not only the apostles, but other missionaries, also, were thus sent out to preach the word and to look after the churches.

Barnabas, "the son of Consolation," as he was named by the apostles, was the Joses, a Levite of Cyprus^c who sold his land and laid the price at the apostles' feet.^d Being from Cyprus, he was naturally chosen to look after the work which had thus originated, at least, in part, with his own countrymen. But this was not all: "he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith,"^e all of which gave him high repute among the brethren at Jerusalem. That the choice proved a wise one and directed of the Spirit, was shown in the results of his labors and his further wonderful missionary association with Paul.

Barnabas, according to a legend, and remember it is a legend, was martyred at Cyprus, 61 A. D. His day is celebrated by the Greek, Roman and Anglican churches on the 11th of June. This date being in the time of the hay harvest, his symbol is a rake. The day was formerly celebrated by great feasts among the English people.

Labors of Barnabas at Antioch.—When Barn-

^cActs 4:36.

^dActs 4:37

^eActs 11:24.

abas reached Antioch and saw among the people the grace of God, he was delighted with the genuine character of the Gentile converts. "He exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord."^f Evidently he made no attempt to exact conformity of the law of circumcision or other requirements of the Jewish law. He appreciated the movement among the Gentiles, just as Peter had been led to accept it through a revelation of God.

Barnabas Seeks Paul,—and the First Gentile Church is Founded.—It will be remembered that after Paul's conversion, and following his first introduction to the church in Damascus and Jerusalem, he went to his home city, Tarsus, on the coast of Asia Minor. Barnabas, familiar with Paul's commission to the Gentiles, and needing help, now went after Paul, brought him to Antioch, introduced the future Apostle of the Gentiles to the converts, and for a whole year the two men joyfully labored together with greater results than ever before. They assembled themselves with the converts and taught much people,^g and thus together established the first Gentile Church, and brought it into harmonious relations with the Church at Jerusalem. In this field, Barnabas and Paul began the expansion of the faith outside of Judaism, which it was destined they should carry on together and separately for years and years to

^fActs 11:23.

^gActs 11:26.

come. They formed a friendship for each other and their common cause that only once was strained but never broken!

The Disciples First Called Christians in Antioch.

—Luke in his record^h notes that the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch. This name, which must have originated with the Gentiles, or those who were not of Judah, implies that their faith was no longer considered a Judaic religion, the name itself distinguishing them from the Jews. The disciples of Christ, up to this time, had called themselves “believers,” or “brethren,”ⁱ “those of the Way,”^j or simply “disciples.”^k But the title Christians now speedily became theirs, and, as they were more and more separated from Judaism, the title, which at first may have been used in derision, became naturally a welcome one. The unbelieving Jews still called them Nazarenes,^l though Agrippa called them Christians, evidently because he had heard the term coined in Antioch.

Antioch Sends Relief to the Poor in Jerusalem.

—As an indication of the amicable relations between the two churches, we have the incident recorded by Luke of the prophets who came to Antioch from Jerusalem. One of these, Agabus, predicted a great famine throughout all the world.^m This prophecy, delivered perhaps in 43 A. D., it is believed, came to pass in about A. D., 44-46, in the

^hActs 11:26.

ⁱActs 9:30; 10:23.

^jActs 9:2.

^kActs 6:1, 2, 7; 9:10, 19, 26.

^lActs 24:5.

^mSee Josephus, “Antiq. of the Jews,” 20:2:5; and 5:2; read note to 2:5.

days of Claudius Ceasar; and we are told that every man according to his ability determined to send relief to the brethren which dwelt in Judea; which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul," the two men to whose labors the Church at Antioch owed the most.

One other occasion it is recorded of this same prophet, Agabus, that he made a prediction concerning Paul's imprisonment in Jerusalem, though this did not divert Paul from his journey.^o We hear no further of him, although there are traditions that he was one of the Seventy disciples of Christ, and that he suffered martyrdom at Antioch.

Prophets in the Early Church.—The importance of the incident just related of Agabus lies in the fact that the early Church believed in prophets. Prophecy was a chief endowment which was bestowed upon the Church after Pentecost. Frequent mention is made of this gift in the literature of the apostolic period.^p This gift of prophecy, and the existence of prophets in the Church in the days of the apostles, shows that it was an age of revelation. Besides having the teachings of Jesus, the disciples, or early Christians, believed that by revelation to prophets, God was continually enlightening them, and by this means communicating truth to them. While this gift belonged to the apos-

ⁿActs 11:27-30.

^oActs 21:10,11.

^pSee Acts 13:1; 15:32; 21:10;

I Cor. 12:28, 29; 14:29, 32,

37; Eph. 2:20; 3:5; 4:11;

Rev. 10:7; 11:18; 14:6; 18:

20-24; 22:6, 9.

ties, it was not confined to them, though they were the judges of the gift.^q It was clear that "upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets" were built the saints of the household of God."

In this connection let us refer to the 6th and 7th articles of our faith:

"We believe in the same organization that existed in the primitive Church, viz: apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, evangelists, etc."

"We believe in the gift of tongues, prophecy, revelation, visions, healings, interpretation of tongues, etc."

^qI Cor. 13:2; 14:16; Acts 21:9; ^rEph. 2:19, 20.

I Cor. 12:10; Rom. 12:6; 1
Cor. 14:29.

CHAPTER 23

THE CHURCH AT ANTIOCH (Continued).

The Herodian Persecution.—About this time Herod Agrippa, king over all Judea, a grandson of Herod the Great, and a son of Aristobulus, began his persecution of the Church, “stretched forth his hands,” as Luke puts it “to vex certain of the Church.”^a It was the fifth persecution, since the beginning of the apostolic Church, and resulted, finally, in the utter rejection of the Gospel by the Jewish state. Herod was a brother of Herodias who was the cause of the murder of John the Baptist; and he died, according to Josephus,^b “in the 54th year of his age, and in the 7th year of his reign,” which would be in A. D. 44. Among the leading characteristics of his whole reign are his very friendly attitude toward the Jews, and his high regard for Jewish customs for which the Jewish historian, Josephus, is loud in his praise.

The Martyrdom of James.—One of the first acts of Herod’s persecution against the Church, was that he “killed James, the brother of John, with the sword.” This happened shortly before the Passover, A. D., 44. James, who was one of the three leading apostles, thus became the first among the Twelve to suffer martyrdom. Though there is no mention of him during the past number of years

^aActs 12:1-4.

^b“Antiq. of the Jews,” 19:8:2.

since the crucifixion, we may depend upon it that it was the bold and uncompromising character of this staunch leader that had attracted the fierce anger of the Jews and their ruler and sympathizer, King Herod Agrippa. But a tradition would give us a glimpse also into the loving and forgiving nature which stamped him as one filled with the Spirit of Christ and his message of salvation. It is recorded by Eusebius, who quotes from Clemens Alexandrinus, that "the accuser of St. James was so much moved by his confession that he declared himself to be a Christian, and was carried off with him to execution. On the way thither he asked forgiveness of the apostle who, after a moment's hesitation, kissed him, saying, "Peace be unto thee."

Herod, seeing that his murder of James pleased the Jews, evidently sought further to increase his popularity among them, by continuing to harass the Christian Church which was considered such a dangerous heresy by the Jews. Hence, "he proceeded further to take Peter also, and when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending, after Easter, to bring him forth to the people."^d

Peter's Deliverance from Prison.—When the members of the Church heard of Peter's imprisonment, they prayed instantly and earnestly unto God

^cSee "Scribner's Dictionary of the Bible," Vol. 2, pp. 540-1.

^dActs 12:3, 4.

for him, even as they had done on a former occasion,^e and their prayers were promptly answered

While Peter was sleeping, bound in chains between two soldiers, and while the keepers of the prison stood at the doors an angel of the Lord in a shining light came to Peter, smote him, raised him up and commanded him to arise quickly. While the messenger yet spoke, the chains fell from Peter's hands, he was told to gird himself, bind on his sandals, cast his garments about him, and follow the angel, which he did. Peter was so surprised that he knew not but that he saw a vision. When they had passed the first and second ward, they came to the iron gate which led to the city. The gate opened for them of its own accord, and they went out and passed on through one street, when the angel, as suddenly as he had come to deliver, left Peter alone to consider the miracle that had been performed in his behalf.

As soon as he could come to himself, he said, "Now I know of a surety that the Lord hath sent His angel to deliver me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews."

After considering his condition, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose surname was Mark, where many of the Saints were gathered together to pray. This Mark, it is generally assumed, was the author of the Gospel by that name,

^eActs 4:23-31; also 2 Cor. 1:11; Eph. 2:18.

and at his pious mother's house the apostles made their home and often met for religious worship. John Mark, the evangelist,^f was a companion of Paul, Baranabas, Peter, and Timothy and is the Mark of the Pauline epistles. John was his Hebrew name, but Marcus or Mark, was the name by which its bearer was most commonly known among those for whom the Acts was written.^g He is spoken of as the cousin of Barnabas,^h the Joseph Barnabas of Acts 4:36, of whom we have already heard many good deeds.

As Peter knocked at the door of Mary, the mother of Mark, a damsel named Rhoda answered, and, hearing Peter's voice, without letting him in, ran back and told how Peter stood at the gate. Forgetting the answer to their own prayer, they called her mad, and said it was his spirit. But they opened the door and to their great astonishment found it was Peter. He told them of his delivery by an angel of God from prison, and asked them to go and show these things to his brethren. He then went to another place fearing that, as this house of Mary was practically his home, they might seek for and find him here.

On the morrow there was great stir among the soldiers, for they knew not where Peter was. When Herod sent for him, and found him not, the King commanded that the keepers should be led away to

^fActs 12:12; 13:5, 13.

^gActs 15:37; Phil. 124; 2 Tim.

4:11; 1 Peter 5:13.

^hCol. 4:10.

death.ⁱ It was a rule that a Roman soldier was responsible with his own life for the life of his prisoner. Hence the soldier who had the care of a prisoner always bound him with a chain to his own person.

The Death of Herod.—Herod now went to dwell in Caesarea. While there he was highly displeased with the rulers of Tyre and Sidon, but they came to him, and desired peace, because their country was “nourished by the King’s country,” in other words, for the sake of business they desired peace. Then, on ‘a set day, Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne and made an oration unto them. And the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man. And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory; and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost. But the word of God grew and multiplied.”^j

Josephus’ Account of Herod Agrippa’s Death.—In his “Antiquities of the Jews,”^k Josephus gives the following interesting account of the manner of the death of Herod:

“Now when Agrippa had reigned three years over all Judea, he came to the city Caesarea, which was formerly called Strato’s Tower; and there he exhibited shows in honor of Caesar, upon his being informed that there was a certain festival celebrated

ⁱActs 12:5-19.
^jActs 12:20-24.

^k“Antiquities of the Jews,”
Book 19:8:2.

to make vows for his safety. At which festival a great multitude was gotten together of the principal persons, and such as were of dignity through his province. On the second day of which shows he put on a garment made wholly of silver, and of a contexture truly wonderful, and came into the theatre early in the morning; at which time the silver of his garment being illuminated by the fresh reflection of the sun's rays upon it, shone out after a surprising manner, and was so resplendent as to spread a horror over those that looked intently upon him; and presently his flatterers cried out, one from one place, and another from another (though not for his good), that he was a god; and they added, 'Be thou merciful to us; for although we have hitherto revered thee only as a man, yet shall we henceforth own thee as superior to mortal nature.' Upon this the king did neither rebuke them, nor reject them, nor reject their impious flattery. But as he presently afterwards looked up,
* * * he fell into the deepest sorrow. A severe pain also arose in his belly, and began in a most violent manner. He therefore looked upon his friends, and said, 'I, whom you call a god, am commanded presently to depart this life; while Providence thus reproves the lying words you just now said to me; and I, who was by you called immortal, am immediately to be hurried away by death.'
* * * And when he had been quite worn out by the pain in his belly for five days, he departed this life."

Return of Barnabas and Saul from Jerusalem.—

Barnabas and Saul, who had been sent from Antioch with relief for the poor,^l returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled their ministry, and they took with them John whose surname was Mark.^m It is implied in the record that their visit to relieve the poor in Jerusalem, took place in the very year of the Herodian persecution, which, if so, may account for their brief stay, and for the fact that no mention is made of their having met any of the apostles there. The fact that Paul does not mention this visit in the first chapter of Galatians need not, as some commentators have thought, throw doubt on its occurrence. His statement, "Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do," is a natural indication that he had remembered the poor on a former occasion.

^lActs 11:29, 30.^mCol. 4:10.ⁿGal.2:10.

CHAPTER 24

PAUL AND BARNABAS

We now come to the third division of the Acts of the Apostles which treats principally of Saul, who is from now on called Paul,^a and his companions, in the three great missionary journeys which he accomplished. It deals also with his visits to Jerusalem, and Rome, and recounts the incidents that took place there.

Tarsus.—Not long after Saul's conversion and his first visit to the Twelve in Jerusalem, he returned to Tarsus, the city of his birth.^b Here he spent a number of years, until Barnabas, being called to Antioch, sought him in his home city^c for further missionary work, and so brought him to Antioch, that great Syrian city, to help in the ministry there. It is generally conceded that his birth and early education in Tarsus of Celicia, were important factors in preparing the Apostle of the Gentiles for his wonderful missionary career. Little is known of his early life here, hence, it is all the more necessary that we should know something of the city and the society in which he received his early impressions. Tarsus was situated in a rich and fertile plain, less than ten miles from the sea, and only slightly above sea level. The Cydnus

^aActs 13:9.

^bActs 9:30.

^cActs 11:25.

river, which flowed through the city in ancient times, broadened just below the city some distance into a lake which forms a harbor close to the sea. This has become in modern times a mere marsh, so that while in old times ships could be sailed directly into the city through the harbor and up the river, both, we are told by modern travelers, are now shallow and impassable, except by the smallest kind of row boats. Though Tarsus never could have had the most invigorating climate, owing to its low and unfavorable location, it is much more unhealthful now than anciently, owing to the proximity of the marshes.

The city was founded, according to an ancient legend, by Sardanapulus; while another legend, reported by Eusebius, names Sennacherib, King of Nineveh, as the founder. It was first an oriental city, but later came under Greek rule, during the reign of Antiochus IV. In 175-164 B. C. it was styled "Antioch beside the Cydnus." Cilicia passed later from the decaying Seleucid empire into the hands of the Romans, and in 64 B. C. was organized as a Roman province with Tarsus for its capital, which city was favorably treated by Julius Caesar and succeeding emperors. Antonius granted Tarsus many privileges and made it his residence for a time. It was here that he received a visit from Cleopatra who sailed through the harbor and up the river to Tarsus in B. C. 38, in her famous trip, in "circumstances of extraordinary magnificence and luxury." When Augustus triumphed

over Antonius, he granted the city of Tarsus even greater privileges than his predecessors had done; and Celia was united in one large province with Syria.

When Paul was a child, Tarsus thus stood at the entrance of the greatest province of the East, as a metropolis, a free city, with a free harbor, "mistress of a large and fertile territory, a center of Roman imperial partisanship." Having been a free Greek city since before B. C. 170, at which time it is highly probable that a Jewish colony first had been established there, it had taken up Greek education which, with its Greek civilization, had made it one of the three great university cities of the Mediterranean world, surpassing, in some respects, even those of Athens and Alexandria. Its native, highly educated sons went abroad to study and reside, only few returning home again. "So strong was the Tarsian love for letters and education! They filled their own university and foreign cities and Rome itself."

Philosophers governed Tarsus when the city was adapting itself to Roman imperialism. Athenodorus and Nestor probably ruled from B. C. 29 to some time after Christ, and it is thought highly probable that Paul may have seen and listened to Nestor who lived 92 years. The doctrines of Athenodorus doubtless influenced the citizenship of Tarsus most in the time of Paul, and he is even likely to have been taught them in the schools of his native city. This philosopher's rule of life has been expressed

in these words: "So live with men as if God saw; so speak with God as if men were listening." The spirit in which he guided the political life of Tarsus is expressed in service; "One must be able to give an account of one's time, and prove one's old age by the amount of what one has done for the world, and not simply by the length of time one has lived."

Such was the best side of the environment in which Paul spent his early years, and it must have had a great influence over him. When, in later years at Jerusalem, he was seized in the temple by the Jews, and bound with chains, and they cried, "Away with him," he answered the question of the chief captain with the proud words that first came to his lips: "I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus, a city of Celicia, a citizen of no mean city,"^d words that in his childhood evidently had been deeply and proudly impressed upon his soul. It was then a great honor to be a citizen of Tarsus, for the mass of the inhabitants, under the systems of Athenodorus, were not citizens in the full sense of the word—that is, only a few possessed the full rights of citizens, a privilege which he doubtless enjoyed. In his excitement, for the moment, he doubtless forgot, though he later remembered and made use of it, that he was a Roman citizen, a higher honor and a greater proof of respectability.

With Tarsus under Rome subsequent to this time, with its checkered history as an Arab city,

^dActs 21:38-39.

and with its modern deterioration under Turkish rule, under which it remains an unshapely ruin, or little more than a wretched collection of hovels, we have no further interest, in this connection. Its temples of philosophy and learning, with its glorious monument of stone and marble, have been utterly destroyed. There remains no trace of its former power and splendor.^e

The honored name of Saul, and the glorious message of salvation which he spent his life in preaching have survived in growing splendor, while his proud city, with all its grandeur, philosophy, and learning, are recalled mostly because he was once a citizen and student there.

Paul's Birth and Training.—From his own statements we learn much from St. Paul about himself. Aside from his life in Tarsus, he declares he was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel in Jerusalem, trained in the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and full of zeal toward God,^f "whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience;"^g "circumcised the eighth day," "of the stock of Israel," "of the tribe of Benjamin," "an Hebrew of the Hebrews," "as touching the law a Pharisee;" "concerning zeal, persecuting the church;" "touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless."^h He profited in the religion of the Jews above many

^eSee W. M. Ramsay's article "Tarsus," pp. 685-689, Vol. 4, "Scribner's Dictionary of the Bible."

^fActs 22:3.

^g2 Tim. 1:3.

^hPhil. 3:5, 6; 2 Cor. 11:22; Rom. 4:1; 9:3; 11:1; Acts 23:6.

of his contemporaries in his own nation, being more exceedingly zealous than they of the traditions of his fathers.ⁱ Paul had a sister in Jerusalem,^j and the family were well-to-do, as we may infer from the education which he received. His occupation as a tent-maker is no denial of this, for all Jews who were well-to-do had the wise foresight to teach their sons some useful handicraft. His mother, as one may gather by implication,^k was zealous in teaching and training her children in piety, and all good behavior, soberness, chastity, discretion, obedience, and to be good home-keepers,^l and lovers of the faith.^m

In Roman Tarsus he undoubtedly received his Latin name Paul, while he was Saul to his fellow Jews and at Jerusalem. When he was converted the voice of Jesus addressed him in his mother tongue as "Saul, Saul."ⁿ

In Paul, "Jew, Greek, and Roman met," comments Findlay.^o "The Jew in him was the foundation of everything Paul became. He was 'Jew' (Judean in nationality and education); 'Israelite' (in descent and creed); 'Hebrew' (in language and tradition.) The current Hebrew (i. e. Aramaic) of Palestine was spoken in his father's house; and his student days gave him a mastery of it which enabled him to address the multitude of Jerusalem in

ⁱGal. 1:14; Acts 26:4, 5.

^jActs 23:16-22.

^kGal. 1:14.

^lTitus 2:3, 5.

^mTitus 3:15.

ⁿActs 26:14.

^o"Scribner's Dictionary of the Bible," Vol. 3, pp. 696-730.

their vernacular,^p and to make himself everywhere 'to the Jews as a Jew.^q * * * Paul's Tarsian birth and Roman citizenship secured for him an outfit for the Gentile apostleship such as no mere Palestinian Jew could possess. * * * Of his Gentile connections, along with his Jewish antecedents, the apostle was thinking when he spoke of God as 'having marked me out [for my life's mission] from my mother's womb.' The Rabbinical student of Jerusalem was first a Jewish boy in the streets of a heathen city, and his home continued to be there. [He was certainly absent from Jerusalem during the visits of Jesus.] St. Paul's insight into the moral working of idolatry, and his ready appreciation of Gentile sentiment, speak for this. He is everywhere at home in the synagogues of the Dispersion. In the Graeco-Asiatic Tarsus, the products of East and West met; ships of all countries lay at its wharves—a place to stir, in an impressionable child, thoughts and dreams of the wide world, and to impart an instinctive aptitude for mixing with all sorts of men. In Saul's nature, Greek versatility was blended with Jewish tenacity.

"Paul's education and native bent were strongly Palestinian and Pharisaic. But he could not help acquiring knowledge of the broader Hellenizing theology that had spread from Alexandria amongst the Greek Diaspora, with which Apollos^r and the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews were im-

^pActs 22:2.

^qI Cor. 9:20.

^rGal. 1:15

^sActs 18:24.

bued. He uses freely the book of 'Wisdom' which emanated from this school. In Col. 1:12-20, he shows his mastery of the theosophic speculations of the Alexandrian (and Essenic) Jewish teachers; and his language appears to indicate some literary contact with his elder contemporary Philo. Paul's use of types and allegory may have been learned from his masters at Jerusalem."

Paul appears to have been frail physically, as one would believe from his reference^t to his weak "bodily presence." His occupation as a journeyman tent-maker probably aggravated the disadvantages of his bodily presence, not to speak of the severe mishandling by his persecutors which he so frequently suffered for the sake of Christ." Yet these infirmities became a source of strength, through the power of Christ that rested upon him."^v But though he was frail and sickly, he must have been of a stout and tough fibre. Witness his travels in connection with his manual and intellectual labors, and these in connection with his persecutions, and we must at once declare him a man of exceptional vitality and nervous energy. "His preaching excited warm assent or contradiction. He set all minds astir, and in debate around him: his presence and discourse acted like an electric current that drives to opposite poles the mingled elements through which it passes."^w

^t2 Cor. 10:10.

^v2 Cor. 11:23-26.

^v2 Cor. 11:30; 12:9, 10.

^wActs 13:42-45; 14:4; 2 Cor. 2:14, 16.

Paul's "thorn in the flesh," the "messenger of Satan" as he calls it, is mentioned by himself in connection with his unique experience of a superabundance of visions and revelations. He says it was given to him lest he should be "exalted above measure."^x What this physical affliction was cannot be positively known, though some have suggested chronic opthalmia;^y but whatever it was, according to his own account, whether bodily weakness, or physical disease, it caused him to be humble.^z The scriptures do not describe it, but his consolations on its account may avail for all of us to whom any thorn is given—and without doubt we all have one.

Of Paul's conversion, we have already treated,^a and it will be further considered as we proceed.^b His missionary career and journeys will be followed in succeeding pages. The consideration of his epistles, with the doctrines of the Lord Jesus Christ explained in them, and upon which the Christian church was founded, would form an exceedingly attractive study in itself, but which is not pertinent to this treatise only as we are obliged to refer to his writings as illustrations of the Acts.

The Call of Paul and Barnabas.—It appears, as we have learned, that in Antioch as well as in Jerusalem, there were prophets. These are named^c "as Barnabas, and Simon that was called Niger, and Lu-

^x2 Cor. 12:1-9.

^yFarrar's "Life and Works of St. Paul."

^zGal. 4:13-15; 1 Cor. 2:3, 4; 2 Cor. 10:10.

^aChapter 20; Acts 9:1-19.

^bActs 22:1-17; 26:9-18.

^cActs 13:1.

cus of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrach, and Saul." It was while these ministered to the Lord and fasted that the Holy Ghost made known to them the will of the Lord and said:

"Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." Then, as is customary in the restored Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, after they had prayed and fasted, they laid their hands on them, setting them apart, after which they were sent away. They went forth by the power of the Holy Ghost, departing unto Seleucia and from thence sailed to Cyprus. The first of the three marvelous missionary journeys of Saul was begun.

CHAPTER 25.

PAUL'S FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY

Antioch the Point of Departure of Barnabas and Paul.—The work which Baranabs and Saul were to perform, and where it was to be done, was not defined, nor was it designated by command of the Spirit to the prophets in Antioch who, through the voice of the Spirit, called them.^a There can be no doubt, however, from what followed, and from the fact that while theirs was a divine call, it was also a call of the Antiochan church, that the work was to be among the Gentiles, principally, though this, of course, did not preclude labors among the Jews. This latter is made clear because the missionaries began their preaching in the synagogues, for they were always careful to remember that the Gospel was designated to be given first to the Jews; and it was, indeed, through the synagogues that they could best so reach the Jews. The two went forth, guided by the Spirit, perhaps not even comprehending the greatness of their mission, nor its far reaching effects in the expansion of the Church and in adding converts to its cause. When the Antiochan church upon which they could rely for help and support, and with the Spirit as their guide, none could have been better prepared than were these messengers of Messiah to open the way for the

^aActs 13:1, 2.

growth and further expansion of the Church among the Gentile nations. Doubtless the call was also in accord with the desires and wishes of the two missionary friends; so that, when they left Antioch in Syria on their first mission, everything was opportune for the work in hand.

Date and Length of the First Journey.—Paul, the apostle, and Baranabas, who, for some years, had supervised the work of the Church in Antioch, to which he was sent from Jerusalem,^b now set out upon their new mission—an adventurous “work”—which was to establish the gospel with great power among the Gentiles, and to expand the Church still further through the Roman empire. About this time St. Paul becomes the hero of the narrative of Luke, just as, up to this time, Peter had been. Regarding the date of their departure, that can only be approximated as between the period A. D., 44-50. Neither can the length of time required for the mission be established definitely. Ramsay^c estimates it as two years and four months. Other commentators think that it occupied only a single summer. Purves concludes that, “we shall perhaps be safe in locating it in 47 and 48.”^d

The Route Taken.—Barnabas and Paul were accompanied by John Mark, a cousin of Barnabas^e, as a helper^f or minister. They left Syrian Antioch for

^bActs 11:19-24.

^d“The Apostolic Age,” pp. 112:

^c“The Church in the Roman

Empire Before A. D. 170,”^eCol. 4:10; Acts 15:37.

pp. 61, 67, 72.

^fActs 13:5.

its seaport Selucia, then sailed^g to Salamis, on the east coast of the island of Cyprus, which was the former home of Barnabas;^h traversed the island from east to west, preaching wherever there was opportunity in the Jewish synagogues. Nothing is said of their success until they reach Paphos,ⁱ on the extreme west coast. Leaving the island, they sailed northwest to Perga in Pamphylia,^j thence proceeded further north to Pisidian Antioch.^k From Antioch they went to Iconium, another Phrygian city, some 80 miles southeast of Antioch, near the borders of Lycaonia. From thence the missionaries passed over into Lycaonia and visited the two cities of Lystra and Derbe, the former being eighteen miles southwest from Iconium, and the latter, on the southeastern frontier of the province of Galatia, and not a great distance northwest of Tarsus, the home of Paul. From here they decided to return to Antioch in Syria and report their labors. They did so practically by the same route they had come. Returning from Pisidian Antioch to Perga, they went thence to Attalia, just west of Perga, from whence they sailed direct to Antioch in Syria, without touching at any port in Cyprus.^l

Opposition in Paphos.—When the missionaries arrived in Paphos, they found a false Jewish proph-

^gActs 13:4.

^hActs 4:36.

ⁱActs Acts 13:6.

^jActs. 13:13.

^kActs 13:14.

^lThe map of the route should be shown the student to

impress the locations and the incidents upon the mind, thus making it easier to follow the events that took place, and the route taken.

et whose name was Bar-jesus. This prophet was with Sergius Paulus, the proconsul, a Roman governor of unusual intelligence, and with interest in religious matters. He called for Baranbas and Paul and desired to hear the word of God, and after hearing, he was converted to the faith in Christ. But he was under the spell of this Jewish sorcerer, Bar-jesus, or Elymas, "the wise man," as he called himself. The sorcerer opposed the missionaries and sought to turn away the proconsul or deputy from the faith. When he did so, Paul, filled with the Holy Ghost, denounced him, called him a devil, an enemy of all righteousness, and commanded: "Wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?" Then Paul further commanded that he should be blind, and "immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand." When the deputy saw this, he believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord."^m The author of the Acts doubtless relates this incident because, as in the case of Simon Magus, a type of many other such encounters," it demonstrated the power and triumph of the true Gospel faith over the great force of Magianism and Oriental theosophy which Elymas represented—a false religious power which was a prominent feature of the Roman world in the Apostolic age.

The incident demonstrated, also, Paul's ascenden-

^mActs 13:6-12.

ⁿActs 8:9-25.

cy of character and inspiration. From this time^o he is called Paul, his foreign name, instead of Saul, as heretofore among the Jews, and appears as the leader of the gospel campaign. It is generally believed that it was at his suggestion that the company sailed northward from Paphos to Perga.

Reaching Perga, John Mark, being perhaps "unwilling to enter so bold and large an enterprise as that which the apostle was undertaking in Asia Minor,"^p left them and returned to Jerusalem. It was a hazardous undertaking of uncertain duration, in which, perhaps, some of the dangers were located mentioned in II Cor. 11:26, 27; and this, too, may have prompted the desertion. The action of Mark evidently displeased Paul very much,^q but, on the other hand, showed the loyalty and devotion of Barnabas who, notwithstanding his kinsman's return was ready to go forward with Paul in the work.

Paul and Barnabas in Pisidian Antioch.—Leaving Perga, after a rough and perilous journey, they reached Antioch, a city of great importance on the high road from Syria to Ephesus and the west, and the military center of the southern part of the Province of Galatia. Here they went into the synagogue, for in the city was a numerous colony of Jews, and they were invited by the rulers of the synagogue to say on, if they had any word of exhortation for the people.

^oActs 13:9.

^qActs 15:38.

^pPurves "Apostolic Ages," p. 113:120.

Paul's First Recorded Sermon.—It was then Paul gave his first recorded address^r which sets forth first a brief review of the history of Israel, to show that the purposes of God in that history ended by sending the Savior and Messiah, Jesus the Christ. It shows that the Jews of the Dispersion well understood the mission of John the Baptist, and that Paul was richly familiar with the teachings of John as recorded in the Gospels.^s Next he recounts the universality of the gospel message, the death and resurrection of the Lord, and His appearance after His resurrection, all in precise accord with prophecy. Jesus is the Lord through whom the promises to Israel will be fulfilled. Paul follows largely Peter's teachings.^t His own interpretations of the Gospel message are also apparent, and they are in line and accord with the ideas which he also emphasizes in his epistles; notably, the ignorance of the Jews in rejecting Jesus;^u the Lord's burial;^v and the Lord's appearances to the original disciples.^w At the close of the address he preaches as Peter did the forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ,^x and further declares: "by him all that believe [and, of course, therefore do the works which Christ demanded] are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." He

^rActs 13:16-41.

after Pentecost, Acts 2

^sCompare Acts 13:24, 25 with and 3.

Luke 3:15, 16; John 1:20-27. ^uI Cor. 2:8; I Tim. 1:13.

^tCompare Acts 13:26-37 with ^vI Cor. 15:4.

Peter's speeches at and ^wI Cor. 15:5-7.

^xActs 13:38.

thus overshadowed the supremacy of the gospel over the law, and the coming complete separation of the followers of Jesus from the followers of the Jewish law—the ground upon which he was soon to fight the battle of complete liberty for the Christian faith, and upon which he was to defend the sufficiency of the gospel of Jesus Christ to insure complete salvation.

The Gentiles who heard Paul asked that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath, and 'many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas; who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God.'^z

Paul and Baranabas Turn to the Gentiles.—The next Sabbath brought many people out to hear them. This awakened the anger of the Jews and made them envious, fearing the loss of their own influence, much like ministers of various denominations did in the early rise of the restored Church of Christ, in the latter days. They could not bear to see the whole city turn out to hear the word of God. So they spoke against the things which Paul had declared, using contradictions and blasphemy.^a

Then Paul and Barnabas became bold, and showed them how it was necessary first to declare the word to the Jews; but, seeing that they had rejected it, and judged themselves unworthy of everlasting life, "Lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set

^zRead and study carefully the ^zActs 13:42, 43.

speech, Acts 13:14-41.

^aActs 13:44, 45; 13:6, 50.

thee to be a light to the 'Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth."^b

As a typical example of their method, they further declared, for the first time, their responsibility to the Jews at an end. This example was followed on other occasions. Thus a Christian community arose in Pisidian Antioch, mainly composed of Gentiles, "who were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord." Antagonism between those who believed and were ordained to eternal life, and those of the synagogue, at once began. But the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region, and the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.

The synagogue, having, of course, the greater influence in the city, Paul and Barnabas were expelled from the place. This was principally through the opposition that came from devout and honorable women who, we are told occupied prominent position and had great influence in the political, official, and social life of Asia Minor, at that time. It was through these agencies that the Jews, in civil authority, became arrayed against the missionaries, resulting in their expulsion. It did not seem to worry Paul and Barnabas much, for "they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium."^d

^bActs 13:46, 47.

^cActs 18:6; 22:21; 28:25-29.

^dActs 13:48-52.

CHAPTER 26.

PAUL'S FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY (Continued)

The Work in Iconium.—Driven from Pisidian Antioch, the missionaries traveled, Ramsey believes,^a on one of the great Roman roads that united the provinces for military and commercial purposes, some eighty miles east by south, to Iconium, the modern Konich, which was then a flourishing commercial city with a Jewish synagogue.

Here they preached for a long time; Ramsey thinks they abode there the whole winter. They met with great success, for they “so spake that a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed.” And the Lord “gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by his hands.” The unbelieving Jews, however, stirred up the city magistrates and the mob, and made the minds of the Gentiles “evil affected against the brethren.” The multitude of the city was divided, part holding with the Jews and part with the missionaries. Then followed assaults both of Gentiles and Jews, together with their rulers, all combining to use them despitefully, and to stone them. Becoming aware of these intrigues, they fled to Lystra and Derbe, cities in Lycaonia, and the regions thereabout, where they continued to preach the gospel.

^aRamsay's "Church in the ^bActs 14:1.
Roman Empire," p. 27. ^cActs 14:1-7.

These four towns—Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe—were all places of importance in the Roman administration, and were located, the first two within Phrygian, and the latter two within Lycaonian Galatia. Lystra was twenty miles south of Iconium and was a colonial link in the “chain of fortresses planted by Emperor Augustus to secure the Pisidian and Isaurian frontier.” Derbe lay fifty miles southeast of Iconium, and was the border town of Galatia, in this direction.

Healing of the Impotent Man at Lystra.—At Lystra their stay was made notable by Paul’s healing of a lame man.^d This certain man, who was impotent in his feet, having been a cripple from birth, heard Paul speak. Paul had observed that he had faith to be healed; and “steadfastly beholding him,” cried out with a loud voice, “Stand upright on thy feet.” Obeying the command, the impotent man “leaped and walked.”^e The miracle had a marvelous effect on the populace, and they shouted in the Lycaonian tongue: “The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men!” Declaring these Greek-speaking visitors gods, they called Barnabas, Jupiter (the Latin for Zeus, the national god of the Greeks), and Paul, Mercurius, (Greek, Hermes) because he was the chief speaker. The priest of the temple of Jupiter, with the consent of the people, was about to offer them sacrifices, oxen

^dActs 14:8-10.

^eActs 14:8-10; see for other similar miracles, Acts 16:

16-18; Matt. 8:2, 3; Acts 28: 8, 9.

and garlands, having been brought to the gates for the purpose.^f This was, indeed, a new experience for the gospel ministers, and the misunderstanding was as unexpected as the experience was new. When they saw what was being done, they rent their clothes, sprang forth among the people, and vigorously protested. It gave Paul a chance to deliver a new style of address,^g in which he was given opportunity to proclaim, in the face of the idolatry of the heathen, the one living and true God, the Creator of all, and the source of the nature which heathenism worshiped in its ignorant blindness. It shows also how apt Paul was in adapting himself to the conditions of the audiences to whom he spoke. He says nothing of salvation, but warns the people to turn from the vain worship of their false gods and sacrifices, to the true and living God.

Paul Declares the Living God to the Heathen.—
Listen to Paul's cry:

"Why do ye these things? We also are men^h of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein: who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless He left not Himself without witness, in that He did good, and gave us rain from heaven,

^fActs 14:11-14.
^gActs 14:15-18.

^hSee Acts 10:26; James 5:17;
Rev. 22:9.

and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."ⁱ

These injunctions apply even in our day to those of us who really incline to worship physical, worldly and material things, and altogether forget the God in whom we have our eternal being.

It is also interesting to note how the speech is strikingly in accord with other similar declarations that are found principally in the epistles of Paul.^j

After Paul had delivered his speech, it was still scarcely possible to restrain the people from offering sacrifice unto the missionaries and tendering them worship.

Paul Stoned at Lystra.—This feeling of worship which was so pronounced among certain of the people that they would have worshiped the new missionaries, soon turned to hate. The work in Lystra was interrupted by Jews who came from Antioch and Iconium stirring up the people to opposition against them. So soon is the fickle populace turned from worship to the hatred of death. he was now stoned,^k and dragged out of the city, under the supposition that he was dead.^l However, happily he was not killed, but as the disciples stood around him, he arose, and came into the city, and the next day he and Barnabas went on their

ⁱActs 14:15, 16, 17.

^kThe single stoning in his

^jCompare, for example, verse 15 with I Cor. 8:4; Rom. 1: 11:25.

24, 25; and verse 17 with ^lActs 14:19.

Rom. 1:20.

way to Derbe, where the Jewish persecution organized from Antioch, appears to have ceased.

Further Ministry.—Nothing is said in the Acts concerning the work of Paul and Barnabas in Derbe, except that they preached the gospel in that city and made many disciples.

While they were at Lystra on this first journey, Timothy, afterwards the trusted companion and friend of Paul, was converted.^m Timothy was the son of a Greek father, and Eunice, the daughter of Lois, a Jewess by religion and perhaps also by birth, and a woman of much faith and piety.ⁿ Timothy was trained by his mother in the Old Testament scriptures.^o He was probably a witness of Paul's sufferings on the first journey, and afterward became his "dearly beloved son" and trusted companion, to whom he wrote two epistles, the second being considered his last writing before his martyrdom.^p It is a very significant epistle, foretelling as it does the apostasy^q which was to overtake the Church, and giving a charge showing what should be a faithful servant's actions while waiting for the time to come when men should "not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.." ^r Both epistles should be

^mI Cor. 4:14-17; Acts 16:1; ^pII Tim. 4: 6-8.

20:4.

^qII Tim. 3:1-7.

ⁿII Timothy 1:5.

^rII Tim. 4:1-5.

^oII Tim. 3:15; 1:5; Acts 16:3.

carefully studied, the first in connection with the two imprisonments of Paul, and the second in connection with the apostasy of the primitive Church, as a basis for its restoration in the Latter-days through the Prophet Joseph Smith.

Paul always speaks of Timothy as one of his own converts,^s and calls to mind later the perils he underwent during his first journey.^t

The Return to Antioch in Syria.—Having reached the limit of South Galatia, the missionaries determined to return to Antioch in Syria. They might have crossed the mountain southeast of Tarsus, and gone that way to Syria; but not wishing to leave the new converts without further organization and instruction, they resolved to return by the way they had come. This they did notwithstanding the danger there must be. Ramsey^u suggests that the danger may have decreased because of the election of new magistrates; but at any rate, danger or no danger, they determined to return again to Lystra, to Iconium, and to Antioch, to confirm the souls of the disciples, exhort them to continue in the faith, and teach them that we must, through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God.^v

They ordained elders in every church, prayed and fasted with them, and commended them to the Lord on whom they believed. Then they went on

^sI Tim. 1:2, 18; II Tim. 1:2; ^u"The Church in the Roman Empire," p. 69.

^tII Tim. 3:10, 12.

^vActs 14:21, 22.

through Pisidia to Pamphylia, preached in Perga, went to Attalia, just west of that city, and from there went direct by water to Antioch on the Orontes, in Syria, from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled.^w

The first missionary journey was ended. At Antioch Paul and Barnabas rehearsed, in the gatherings of the Church, their wonderful experiences showing all that God had done with them, and how He had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles. Here they continued to abide a long time with the disciples.^x

Items to Remember.—Paul and Barnabas, we must assume, had everywhere carried the story of Jesus' life, death and resurrection; and had organized, among the Gentiles in each city, a church to foster the life of the disciples, and ordained elders to look after them. }

It was made clear by this mission, that the heathen in the Graeco-Roman cities were prepared in large numbers to receive the gospel: "God had opened to the Gentiles a door of faith."

Paul came to the front as chief of the Gentile mission, through force of events; and the "signs of an apostle" subsequently wrought among the Corinthians^y were plainly visible to him, throughout

^wActs 14:23-26.

^yII Cor. 12:12.

^xActs 14:27, 28.

this journey; in signs, and wonders and mighty deeds.”

“In Paul, finally, had appeared the man who, by training, experience, and revelation, was prepared to maintain the principles on which the expansion could logically proceed and to carry it onward.”^z

^zPurves, “Apostolic Age,” p. 122:131.

CHAPTER 27

THE APOSTOLIC COUNCIL IN JERUSALEM

Paul, Barnabas, and Others go to Jerusalem About the Question of Circumcision.—About A. D. 50, a year or so, or, as the record says, “long time,” or “no small time,” after Barnabas and Paul had returned from their first mission, the Church at Antioch was disturbed by circumcisionists who came to Judea teaching the brethren: “Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses^a ye cannot be saved.”^b In view of what had happened heretofore, particularly in the ministry of Peter,^c it was no wonder that Paul and Barnabas, whose labors had been among the Gentile who had been taught that circumcision was unnecessary, should have “no small dissension and disputation with them.” It was, therefore, determined, presumably by a council, that Paul and Baranabs, with certain others, “should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.”^d

The Church in Antioch stood behind their going, and Paul himself declares that they were called by revelation.^e As they passed through Phoenicia and Samaria, they preached on the way, “declaring the conversion of the Gentiles; and they caused great joy unto all the brethren.”

^aLev. 12:3,

^bActs 15:1; see Col. 2:8-17.

^cActs 10 and 11.

^dActs 15:2.

^eGal. 2:2.

Arriving at Jerusalem, they were received by the apostles and elders of the Church unto whom, no doubt, all the details of their first mission were recounted, as well as all that God had done with them.^f

Writing afterward,^g to the Galatians, Paul gives to them an account of this conference at Jerusalem, and states that before making public to the Church at Jerusalem, the gospel of uncircumcision which he had preached to the Gentiles, he went "privately to them which were of reputation, [the leaders of the Church in Jerusalem] lest by any means I should run, or had run in vain." This showed his respect for the authorities, and evidently he put the substantial question at issue directly before them for decision, whether he had "run in vain."^h

The Council Meet to Consider the Question.—

After the private conferences, which paved the way for the public settlement, the apostles and elders came together to discuss the question and consider this matter. To Paul, the question was paramount; for, if it was decided that the Gentiles must be circumcised first, in order to be Christians, then his mission would be stultified.

Certain of the sect of the Pharisees, who had joined the Church and were Christian believers, contended that converts must not only be circum-

^fActs 15:4.

^gAbout A. D. 60.

^hPaul's account of the conference together.

it for granted, corresponds to Acts 15:1-33 and the two accounts should be studied together, Gal. 2:1-10; we take

cised, but must also be commanded to keep the law of Moses.

It will thus be noticed that the decision to be made would go far beyond the mere question of circumcision. It would decide the whole relation of the law of Moses to Gentile believers. If it should be favorable to Paul, it would certainly separate the Church of Christ from all relationship to and dependence upon the Mosaic law, and make its membership a distinct and chosen people, selected from all nations to the glory of the name of Christ.

Peter's Speech.—There was doubtless much dispute, and arguments were put forth on both sides. Peter, according to Luke's account, was the first speaker. He argued strongly and impetuously, as was his nature, for Christian liberty. He it was, it will be remembered, who used the keys of the Priesthood, first for the Jews, on the day of Pentecost; and, secondly, in the house of Cornelius, for the Gentiles. The Lord, he now declared, purified the hearts of the Gentiles by faith. The law, he considered, an unbearable yoke even to the Jews, and he held that their salvation depended, as did that of the Gentiles, on the grace of Christ. The address uncompromisingly placed Peter on the side of Paul and Barnabas.ⁱ

Testimony of Paul and Barnabas.—The multitude now kept silence while Paul and Barnabas were given audience. According to Luke, they

ⁱRead Acts 15:7-11.

dwelt mainly on the miracles and wonders which God had wrought among the Gentiles by their ministrations, to show that their work was approved of the Lord.^j It is quite probable, however, that they may also have made use of some of the arguments which Paul later made use of on hearing that the Galatians also had become prey to the legalizers, or Judaizing missionaries, from Jerusalem.

In this connection, the whole epistle of Paul to the Galatians should be read and considered. The theme of this epistle is the vindication of the gospel of Christ from any admixture with Mosaic law conditions. It treats of justification by faith, and not by the works of the Mosaic law. Mind, this does not mean that men are justified by faith alone, but implies that having faith in the gospel of Christ, the works required by the law of the gospel of Christ, together with faith in Him, are justification unto complete salvation, independent and regardless of the law of Moses to Israel. We repeat again, every chapter of Paul's epistle to the Galatians should be read as an argument in this hearing.

The Speech of James.—Following the testimony of Paul and Barnabas, James, the brother of the Lord, who appears to have taken charge of the council as speaker, perhaps because Peter, who was the undoubted and recognized head of the Church, had so desired it, on account of his being in a measure already committed to the Gentile cause, called

^jActs 15:12.

attention to Peter's visit to Cornelius by which, for the first time, it was demonstrated that a people for the Lord should be chosen out of the Gentiles for His name.^k Then he showed that the scriptures agree with this idea.^l The Gentile converts were to be an addition to Israel such as is predicted in Amos 9:11, 12. Unlike Peter's James' address was conservative, corresponding to the characters of the two men. James' speech shows his thoroughly Jewish as well as Christian character. His decision, we are told and may well believe, was prompted by the Holy Ghost.^m The suggestion that nothing besides the principles of the gospel that could at all be considered as Jewish law, further than the "four acts of abstinence," should be required of the Gentiles, cannot and should not be considered as a compromise with the Judaizers. It was fully conceded that the Gentiles should be free from the law; but in granting this, the council considered it also absolutely necessary that the freedom so given should in no way offend the conscience of the Jews, nor appear to them to sully the Christian name by the introduction into the Christian body of these offensive customs of the Pagans. Paul, writing later,^o seems to explain and broaden the council's intent: "Give none offense, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God." He was very broad-minded in these mat-

^kActs 10:34-48.

^lActs 15:13-18.

^mActs 15:28.

ⁿActs 15:29.

^oICor. 10:31- 33.

ters, and favored abstinence from anything that might offend others.^p

The Momentous Decision.—The judgment of James was then given. He suggested that “we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: but that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood.”^q The apostles and elders of the whole Church were evidently pleased with, and adopted this conclusion. Paul and Barnabas, with chosen men of the Church, namely, Judas Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren, were sent with them to Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia. They carried letters with them setting forth the decision of the Church, showing that the Gentiles are not under the law but under grace. The copy of the letters is recorded in Acts 15:23-29, and the passages should be carefully considered. The Gentiles were cautioned to do certain necessary things, called the “four acts of abstinence,” which evidently their heathen or pagan beliefs had not heretofore imposed upon them, and which the Jews considered, and justly, as “Gentile abominations,” abhorrent in the eyes of the Jews.^s These were to be observed as gospel requirements, so that the Gentiles should not give offense to the goodly Jews; while the Christian Jews were to take no offense at the uncircumcision of the Gentiles.

^pI Cor. 8:7-13.

^qActs 15:19-21.

^rActs 15:22.

^sActs 15:28, 29.

The company were dismissed from Jerusalem, and came to Antioch, where they gathered the multitude together and read the letter to them, which gave them much consolation and caused them greatly to rejoice. Judas and Silas, who themselves were prophets, spoke many words of exhortation to the people, confirming the contents of the message which the Church in Jerusalem had sent for their consolation. After continuing for a time in Antioch, they were permitted to return in peace to the apostles. But Silas, evidently enjoying the work, abode there still. Paul and Barnabas with many others continued to preach and teach the word of the Lord in Antioch.

Authority.—In connection with the council at Jerusalem, it should be noticed that the authorities at Jerusalem—the apostles, with Peter at their head were considered, both by the Jewish Christians and by the mixed churches of Syria, as the presiding, united body of leaders. They were looked up to as having the power of presidency, by means of their calling and experiences, as well as by revelation and inspiration. This body was held much in the same light by all Christians at that time, as was the Sanhedrin of Jerusalem, by the Jews. If this presiding body had been perpetuated, according to the order of the Priesthood, doubtless the unity of the Church would have continued and prevailed, and men would not have been witnesses to the great apostasy which, a hundred years later, or more, came about. The restored Church of Christ,

through the Prophet Joseph Smith, is built upon the same principles as was the Church anciently, and its perpetuation by continued organization, is insured. It will never be thrown down nor be given to another people, if the Saints prove faithful to principle, and continue the presiding quorums intact, so that the mind and will of the Lord Jesus Christ may be manifested to them by His revelations to His servants.

Soon after the time we are treating it became the rule not to recognize the ecclesiastical authority at Jerusalem, and wholly independent churches sprang up; and even in the days of Paul^t there was a foreshadowing the great apostasy following, during which the quorums of the Priesthood fell into decay, and the Church organization lost its original identity.

^tII Tim. 3:1-5.

CHAPTER 28

SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY OF ST. PAUL

The Parting of Paul and Barnabas.—After having continued his labors in Antioch for some time, Paul proposed to Barnabas that they go again and visit the brethren in every city where they had preached the gospel, and see how they were faring.^a The proposal seems to have met the favor of Barnabas, but when a minister or aid was to be taken along, Barnabas was determined on having John Mark, his nephew, go with them.

A sharp difference of opinion arose between them on this subject, which led to a rupture that caused the separation of the two friends who thenceforth never saw each other again. Whether it was only because Mark, on the former journey, had suddenly left them^b and returned home, or whether it was a deeper cause which involved the changed relations of the two leaders, or both, we are not informed. We know this, however, that Paul was later reconciled to John Mark.^c As to the second cause, if such it was, we should remember that on the first journey Barnabas stood first, and was the acknowledged leader, while Paul was second. Then again, Mark was strongly Jewish in his training and belief, and he may not have seen the wisdom of promulgating the gospel to the heathen, and particu-

^aActs 15:36.

^bActs 15:38.

^cPhilemon 24; Col. 4:10: II
Tim. 4:11.

larly in the difficult country to which Paul proposed going. There was now, also, a striking evidence of Paul's ascendancy to leadership among the Gentiles, and particularly was this the case since their recent return from the council at Jerusalem. This ascendancy was shown even on the first journey,^d when it was clearly indicated that the work would include the Gentiles, and that Paul was taking his place as leader. For these new conditions, Mark evidently was not prepared, and so he had returned home, which action made a deep impression upon Paul.

So, when Barnabas was determined to take John along on this second journey, Paul objected, thinking it not good to take with them the man who had deserted them in Pamphylia and not gone with them on their former journey. They then separated, Barnabas taking Mark and sailing to Cyprus, and is thenceforth heard of no more in the story of the Acts. From the mention subsequently^e made of him^f it is clear that Paul had still great respect and sympathy for Barnabas; and well he might, for Barnabas held Paul, his dear friend, in such high esteem, and admired his ability and energy so much that he had first commended Saul^g to the apostles, and later sought him in Tarsus to aid in the ministry, thus on two occasions finding and saving him for the work of the Lord, besides having spent

^dNote Acts 13:13.

^eA. D. 59.

^fI Cor. 9:6; Philemon 24; Col. 4:10.

^gActs 9:27

years of happy labor with him for the Christian cause.

Silas Chosen Paul's Companion.—Paul, as a result of his misunderstanding with Barnabas, now chose Silas, or Silvanus, a Hebrew of Latin name, for his companion on his second missionary journey. Silas was one of the prophets, and a leading member of the Church in Jerusalem, and in all probability a Roman citizen.ⁱ Under the circumstances Paul's choice of Silas as his missionary colleague was especially fitting, in view of the projected tour through Syria and Cilicia, whither they were to go confirming the churches^j of the Gentiles to which Silas already had been chosen.^k If Silas, was a Roman citizen, which is generally conceded, that, also may have been a fact in his favor, in view of impending perils from the Gentiles as well as from the unbelieving Jews. That the Church in Jerusalem reposed complete confidence in Paul's mission may be inferred from the fact that Silas, who was a leading member of the Church at Jerusalem, accepted Paul's invitation, and that Paul was recommended by the brethren into the grace of God. This, let it be remembered, notwithstanding the apostle's personal differences^l with Barnabas, the trusted ambassador of the Church,^m and his ecclesiastical disputes with Peter the chief apostle.ⁿ

^hActs 15:22-32, 40.

ⁱActs 16:37.

^jActs 15:41.

^kActs 15:22, 23.

^lGal. 2:13.

^mActs 11:22.

ⁿGal. 2:11, 12, 14.

Places Visited in the Second Journey.—Silas accompanied Paul on this second journey, not only through Syria and Celicia, but in Lycaonia, Phrygia, Galatia and down to Troas.^o He went with Paul to Macedonia, and shared his experiences at Philippi,^p thence to Thessalonica (now war-torn Saloniki of Greece), and further to Berea, where he remained with Timotheus after St. Paul's departure for Athens.^q It was intended he should join Paul at Athens,^r but owing to the apostle's early departure from that city he joined him instead at Corinth.^s His service there is referred to in II Cor. 1-13. Silas is named in the salutation in the two letters sent by Paul from Corinth to the Thessalonians, after which his name disappears from the history.

Paul's journey extended farther across the Aegean Sea to Ephesus, Miletus, and thence to Tyre, from whence he went on his short visit to Jerusalem. Thus we have a brief mention of the places visited in the second journey. The map should be consulted to show the route taken. Now as to the incidents.

Paul and Timothy.—Arriving at Derbe and Lys-tra, overland through Tarsus through a narrow defile in the Tarsus or Bull mountains, Paul chose Timotheus to accompany him to take the place of John Mark, if not of Barnabas. We have already

^oActs 16:1-8.^pActs 16:12.^qActs 17:14.^rActs 17:15.^sActs 18:5.

learned who Timothy was. Two incidents relative to his being chosen for the ministry are here worthy of special notice. The first and most important is that he was chosen by inspiration or revelation, and set apart for his mission by the laying on of hands. That he was chosen by prophecy is inferred in I Tim. 1:18, where it is intimated that prophetic utterances, perhaps those of Silas, who was a prophet,^t led Paul to him. The local elders laid their hands on him," and set him apart formally for the task unto which he was called. Paul himself officiated in the ceremony which thus set "his son" apart for the work.^v

The other incident is the circumcision of Timothy which Paul himself performed.^w After the council in Jerusalem, and what occurred between Paul and Peter^x at Antioch, this action would seem very inconsistent; but it was done, as stated in the text, "because of the Jews." Timothy was the son of a Greek father and a Jewish mother, and without circumcision he would have little or no influence for good among the Jews: in fact, would not even be permitted to teach in in their synagogues. On the other hand, in the matter of Titus,^y a Greek, Paul was contending for a principle, his circumcision having been proposed as a test case; and if it had been permitted, it would have implied a distrust of the gospel of Christ as a complete power unto salvation, according to his contention.

^tActs 15:32.

^uI Tim. 4:14.

^vII Tim. 1:6.

^wActs 16:3.

^xGal. 2:11-14.

^yGal. 2:3; II Cor. 8:16, 23.

The missionaries continued their work through the churches, delivering the message, or resolution of the council at Jerusalem,² as they went, which were received everywhere with lively satisfaction. The churches were strengthened and established in the faith, and increased in numbers daily.

Paul's Call by Vision to Macedonia.—After revisiting the churches in Galatia, it was doubtless Paul's plan to push westward along the great Roman highway to Ephesus, the chief city of Asia Minor, and the stepping stone to Greece and Rome; but the Holy Ghost forbade them preach the word in Asia, or the Roman province by that name which had Ephesus for its capital. Having come to Mysia, much farther north, they were again forbidden by the spirit to go into Bithyna. They then came to Troas, a city on the Aegean coast of Asia Minor, in a district called, in modern times, the Troad, the home of the early Trojans. While here a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man from Macedonia, a district between the Adriatic and Aegean seas, stood by Paul, and besought him, saying: "Come over into Macedonia and help us." They took this to mean that the Lord had called them to preach the gospel to the Macedonians. Here it was that the gospel turned toward Europe. They then determined to take a straight course to Samothracia, and thence to Neapolis and Philippi, which was on European ground. It was, therefore, in about the spring of 50 A. D. that the gospel

²Acts 15:23-29.

through this company was first heard on European soil.^a Luke, the author of Acts, is believed to have joined them in Troas, and it will be noticed that the first person plural, "we" now commences in the narrative.^b

Paul and Silas at Philippi.—The company abode certain days in Philippi, and on the Sabbath they went out by a riverside beyond the city, there being no synagogue in the place, where it was customary for the Jews to worship because of the facility for the frequent ablutions which their worship required. Here they sat down and spake unto the women who had gathered there. A riverside in the open, with mostly women for an audience—thus entered the gospel message into Europe.^c To the Church which grew out of this worship, St. Paul afterwards addressed, while Nero's prisoner, the most jubilant of all his epistles, the occasion of which, liberally, is disclosed in Phil. 4:10-18.

The First European Convert.—The first Christian convert in Europe, so far as is known, was a woman whose name was Lydia, a Jewish proselyte, a seller of purple, and a resident of Thyatira, a city of Lydia, located northeast of Ephesus, in Asia Minor. She was a ready listener in Philippi. Her heart was opened and she believed and with her household was baptized. She then invited the missionaries to stay at her home which invitation was accepted.^d

^aActs 16-6-12.

^bActs 16:10f.

^cActs 16:12, 13.

^dActs 16:14, 15,

A Demon Cast Out.—As the missionaries, while in Philippi, daily went to pray, there was a certain damsel who possessed an evil spirit, and who thereby brought her masters much gain. She followed Paul and the others testifying: "These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation." This she did so long that Paul was grieved, and in the name of Jesus Christ, commanded the spirit to come out of her, and it came out the same hour.^e This was the first miracle performed in Europe.

Paul and Silas Arrested and Beaten.—When the masters of this fortune-telling, ventriloquist slave-girl saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they arrested Paul and Silas, and brought them, followed by the crowd, to the magistrates, and complained of their unlawful, Jewish customs. The magistrates rent off their clothes, and forthwith and without trial, commanded that they be beaten. They received many stripes, were cast into jail, and the Jailer, who was charged to keep them safely, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in stocks.^f

Conversion of the Philippian Jailer.—Paul and Silas prayed in prison, and sang praises unto God, and were heard by the prisoners. In answer to their prayers a miracle was performed. The prison was severely shaken by an earthquake. All the doors were flung open, and the bands of all therein

^eActs 16:16-18.

^fActs 16:19-24.

were loosened. The prison keeper, upon witnessing the conditions, would have killed himself, for he supposed the prisoners to have fled. But Paul commanded the jailer to do himself no harm, for all the prisoners were there. The jailer called for a light, sprang into the prison, and trembling, fell down before Paul and Silas. He then brought them out and, with faith believing in their power and mission, cried out as did the Jews on the day of Pentecost: "What must I do to be saved?"

This gave Paul his opportunity to preach the gospel. The jailer was asked to believe and have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ through whom he and his house should be saved. Then they further preached the gospel, the word of the Lord, unto him, and all that were in his house, explaining the gateway to salvation as it was and is—the first principles of the gospel—faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, repentance of sin, baptism by immersion for the remission of sins, and the reception of the light of the Holy Ghost by the imposition of hands. That he repented is evidenced by the fact that in the same hour of the night, we are told, he washed their stripes, and that he, with all his household, was baptized. He then set meat before them and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house. Thus by earthquake and miracle were the second converts in Europe brought to a knowledge of the truth.^g

The Magistrates Fear.—When day dawned, the

^gActs 16:25-34.

magistrates sent sergeants and commanded the prison keeper to "Let those men go." The jailor told Paul, and advised him to depart in peace. But Paul did not feel that such was the right course. They had beaten them openly, and cast them into prison uncondemned, being Romans. Now, was it right they should be cast out privately, "Nay," said they, "let them come themselves and fetch us out."

[The magistrates feared, when they heard the missionaries were Romans, and came personally and brought them out, pleading with them to leave the city. They evidently finally consented.

They left the prison and went to the house of Lydia, where they saw the brethren, comforted them,^h and later departed for Amphipolis, and Apollonia, thence to Thessalonica, where there was a Jewish synagogue.ⁱ

^hActs 16:40.

ⁱActs 16:35-40; 17:1.

CHAPTER 29.

SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY OF ST. PAUL (Continued)

Reflections on the Work in Philippi.—Philippi was an important Roman colony and was perhaps the dwelling place of Luke, Clement and other leaders.^a At least Luke stayed in Philippi after he had joined Paul at Troas, and was found there when Paul later revisited the place.^b The Church in Philippi, though established in the midst of Pagan opposition which did not cease,^c grew steadily in numbers and power. As Paul and his co-laborers left to further continue their labors, it must have been with satisfactory feelings of thankfulness to the Lord that they had thus far been able to set the seal of success upon the introduction of the gospel of Christ into Europe.

Much more had doubtless been accomplished than is recorded by Luke. The consecration, zeal, and liberality which the Saints showed in bestowing of their substance to the poor among the Church of Macedonia, of which the Church in Philippi was a leader, is testified to by Paul in his later writings.^d In the passage named, Paul has given us a beautiful dissertation on the Christian virtue of giving—bear-

^aPhil. 4:3.

to 16:17 and resumes again

^bNote that the "we" of the at 20:5, 6.

Acts continues from 16:10 ^cPhil. 1:28-30.

^dII Cor. 8:1-15.

ing one another's burdens—a fundamental doctrine in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, even as it was of the Church of the former-day Saints.^e

Paul refers also to the affectionate relations which the members of the Church in Philippi had to himself,^f their steadfastness in the faith,^g and the financial aid which on two different occasions they rendered him.^h Being evidently also properly organized into a branch of the Church with necessary officers, including bishops, and deacons,ⁱ the Saints at Philippi present a beautiful picture of gospel success, and one that must have been most pleasing and satisfactory to the tireless founder, Paul.

Founding the Church at Thessalonica.—Passing through Amphipolis and Apollonia from Philippi, Paul, with Silas and Timothy, went westward about one hundred miles to Thessalonica^j which was an influential center of the class that it seems to have been their object to occupy. The city is the modern Saloniki, on what was anciently called the Thermaic gulf, after an earlier town on the same site called Therme, so known to Herod. Next to Syrian Antioch it was the most important city Paul had so far reached. It was the chief city of commerce and trade of the peninsula of Thrace, and

^eBook of Mormon, Mosiah 18:27-29; Doc and Cov. 42: 30, 31; 119.
^fPhil. 1:7, 25; 4:1.
^gPhil. 1:5, 27; 2:12.
^hPhil 4:14-16.
ⁱPhil 1:1.
^jActs 17:1.

the seat of the Roman administration of Macedonia, commanding the whole region lying to the north. It contained also an influential Jewish synagogue. Here Paul successfully reasoned with the people from the scriptures for three Sabbaths, and doubtless longer, preaching Jesus Christ risen from the dead.^k Not only were many turned from idols to serve the true and living God, but from here the gospel was sounded not only in "Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to Godward is spread abroad."^l A multitude believed and consorted with Paul and Silas, some Jews, many devout Greeks, and of the chief women^m not a few."

Paul's experience here was much like that at Pisidian Antioch. He was severely opposed by envious Jews and lewd fellows of the baser sort, though the persecution now took a new form which reminds us of the charge against Jesus before Pilate—disloyalty and sedition. Paul's company are charged with having turned the world upside down, and further are brought before the rulers accused by the rabble of saying, contrary to the decrees of Caesar: "There is another king, one Jesus."^o

Considerably more information about the work at Thessalonica than is contained in the Acts, is given by Paul himself, in his epistles to the Thessalonians, which, in this connection, should be carefully read by the student. They give not only his

^kActs 17:2, 3.

^l1 Thess. 1:6-10.

^mActs 13:50; Phil. 4:3.

ⁿActs 17:4.

^oActs 17:5-9.

teachings which, at this time, related largely to the setting up of the Kingdom of God, but they deal also with the mighty operations of the Spirit and the practical needs of men.

Paul's accusers did not succeed in arresting him, but took Jason, a resident convert, and some of the other brethren before the rulers, binding Jason by security. The nature of the security is not mentioned, though Ramsay^b thinks it was to prevent Paul, who was the cause of the disturbance, from returning to Thessalonica.^a Apprehending further trouble, however,^c the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas, accompanied by Timothy, by night to Berea, an island town about fifty miles south and west of Thessalonica, on the eastern slope of the Olympus range of mountains near Mt. Bermius.^d

Paul at Berea.—The company arriving at Berea, went immediately to the synagogue of the Jews, who seem here to have been nobler and more tolerant than in Tessalonica, and who received the missionaries with all readiness of mind. They listened with respect to their teaching, and searched the scriptures to see whether their message was true. Many believed, and a church was formed, consisting of honorable women who were Greek, and men not a few.^e

However, Jews from Thessalonica followed to Berea and stirred up trouble by arousing popular

^b"St. Paul the Traveler," p. 231.

^aActs 17:9.

^cI Thess. 2:14-18.

^dActs 17:10.

^eActs 17:11, 12.

feeling against Paul and his brethren. So strong was this persecution that the danger of Paul's life as a result must have been great; for with his work uncompleted,^u he was immediately sent by sea out of the country and escorted all the way to Athens.^v We may well agree, therefore, that Paul's anger later expressed in his epistles, is clearly justified against the bitter persecution of the persistent and vindictive Thessalonican Jews.^w

Silas and Timotheous, for the time being, continued in Berea. |

Paul at Athens.—When Paul arrived at Athens, he dismissed his accompanying friends, and charged them to request Silas and Timothy to come to him from Berea with all speed. While he was waiting for them, his spirit was stirred at the idolatry of Athens, the city of philosophers.^x He was hailed by them as a wandering lecturer upon some curious form of religious speculation, because he preached Jesus and the resurrection. Certain of the Stoics and Epicureans, therefore, regarding him with amused contempt, brought him before either the court of the Areopagus, which was charged with the public teaching of the city, or before a congregation where the court was accustomed to sit. Here he was given a hearing.^y He took for his text an inscription he had chanced to see on an altar: "To the Unknown God," and then delivered to

^uI Thess. 2:17, 18.

^vActs 7:13-15.

^wSee I Thess. 2:14-16.

^xActs 17:16.

^yActs 17:17-20.

those Athenians and strangers, who "spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing,"^z his famous speech "in the midst of Mars Hill."^a The result was disappointing, only one Aeropagite, Dyonisius, a woman named Damaris, and a few others being converted.^b Some mocked and others wanted to hear him again; but Paul, in his disappointment, finally moved on to Corinth, where later he appeared before the Corinthians not with "excellency of speech or wisdom," but with a determination to know nothing among them "save Jesus Christ and him crucified."^c He seems to have been disappointed with his own effort to present the gospel of Christ so that it might appeal to philosophers.

Paul's Speech at Mars' Hill.—Paul's courageous effort to preach to the most learned men of his age, nevertheless, is a profound and earnest discourse in which there are great truths, clever argument, and much useful information.^d It leads up from the general truth of the spiritual nature of God and his Fatherly relation to men, to the resurrection of the dead and the coming of Jesus Christ to judgment. The student will do well to learn to repeat the discourse, and the class to discuss the leading thoughts:

1. With all of Athens' deities, One they knew not.

^zActs 17:21.

^aActs 17:23-32.

^bActs 17:34.

^cI Cor. 1:1, 2.

^dActs 17:23-32.

2. Paul proclaimed Him as the Creator and Lord of the universe and all that in it is.

3. Paganism is unworthy the majesty of the God.

4. God governs the world; all races are one, man is subject to God; and God's desire is that man should seek and find Him.

5. God who is ever near us, desires no absurd worship of idols, but rather man's spiritual fellowship with him.

6. The times of ignorance formerly permitted are now past; a new revelation has been made. Men are called to repent.

7. The judgment is approaching, when Jesus, raised from the dead, shall be the universal judge.

CHAPTER 30

SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY OF ST. PAUL (Continued)

Paul at Corinth.—After these experiences at Athens, Paul departed from that city and landed in Corinth. Here he continued a year and six months teaching the word of God.^a Coming to Corinth without definite intention of staying, Paul's ministry among the people in this place, nevertheless, became the most momentous in his whole wonderful career. He was doubtless under the impression, that his call to Macedonia^b was still operative. He was eager to return to Macedonia and especially to Thessalonica,^c but was prevented by a combination of circumstances which he sums up in the expression, "Satan hindered us."

Corinth, as Paul saw it, was comparatively a new city, having been rebuilt in B. C. 46 by Julius Caesar upon the ruins of the very old city, which the Romans captured, sacked and burned in B. C., 146. In Paul's day it was a city of large commercial importance with a population that included representatives of all classes and races, attracted thither for various reasons to partake in the busy intercourse of trade and traffic characteristic of the Roman world. It was the residence of the procurator of Achaia of which it was the chief city. Its popula-

^aActs 18:11.

^bActs 16:9, 10.

^cI Thess. 2:17, 18.

tion was mixed and pleasure loving, their races, games and contests being noted everywhere. Their morals were a byword, and it is well said that "to leave Athens for Corinth was to exchange an intellectual for a sensuous atmosphere." It was the seat of the worship of Aphrodite, which goddess retained here, on the Grecian Isthmus, much of the abominable character of the Asian and Phoenician religion from which she sprang—which religion tolerated vice as a part of that goddess' ceremonials. The viciousness of Corinthian morals was proverbial throughout the Roman world. We may, therefore, well understand how vile was the society out of which the Corinthian congregation arose, and how deep in the mire the converts who relapsed from the teachings of Paul were apt, in case of apostasy, to fall. It is no wonder that Paul wrote as he did in I Cor. 5, 6, 7, and in his last epistle, that they should not company with fornicators.^d Also that if the Saints were to cut themselves off altogether from vicious people, "then must ye needs go out of the world."^e

Arriving at Corinth, Paul obtained lodging and work, because they were tent makers, like Paul, with the Jews Aquilla and his wife Priscilla^f who later became not only his converts, but his co-laborers in the noble gospel work in which he was engaged.^g These co-laborers of Paul had

^dI Cor. 5:9.

^eI Cor. 5:10.

^fActs 18:2, 3.

^gActs 18:18, 26; Rom. 16:3;
I Cor. 16:19; II Tim. 4:9.

lately come to Corinth from Rome because of an edict of Claudius expelling the Jews from the capital.^h

Founding of the Church in Corinth.—From the home of Aquila, the apostle went forth every Sabbath and reasoned in the synagogue with the Corinthian Jews and Greeks. During the week days he worked to support himself by his trade. Despite many weaknesses and discouragements, he preached in spirit and in power, to the people, Jesus and Him crucified.ⁱ

At last Silas and Timothy joined him with a favorable report from Thessalonica.^j It was then that Paul's enthusiasm was awakened to greater activity.^k

This activity led to an open rupture with the Jews. He then established himself with Titus Justus, a devout Gentile who abode next to the synagogue. He appears to have become discouraged with the Jews, and told them plainly he would have nothing to do with them, but "from henceforth, I will go unto the Gentiles."^l The ruler of the synagogue, and many of the Corinthians believed and were baptized^m by him or his companions, most of the believers, however, being from among the Gentiles. The work continued for many months and spread from Corinth to adjacent towns.ⁿ

^hActs 18:2.

ⁱI Cor. 2: 2-4.

^jI Thess. 3:6.

^kActs 18:5.

^lActs 18:6.

^mActs 18:8; I Cor 1:14.

ⁿII Thess. 1:4; II Cor. 1:1;

Rom. 16:1.

Paul seems to have labored while here under severe mental struggle, for we read of his fears and struggles, notwithstanding his spiritual ardor was perhaps now greater than in any other time of his career.^o The vow which he took to preach in simplicity the gospel of Christ^p he maintained, though it seems to have offended both Jew and Greek.^q Notwithstanding he was tempted, no doubt, to make his message more ornamental in style and philosophical in substance, he preached the gospel in simplicity, and relied upon the Spirit to demonstrate its truth to the consciences of men, by all odds the most successful way to teach the doctrines of Christ.

The Lord approved of him, for in a vision of the night^r he spake to Paul this comforting missionary message: "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city."

Gallio.—The progress of the Church under these circumstances was so pronounced that finally the Jews attempted to arrest it by force.^s When Gallio, who was a brother of the philosopher Seneca, was made procurator of Achaia, the Jews brought Paul to the judgment seat and accused him of persuading "men to worship God contrary to the law." Paul was about to make reply, but Gallio refused to

^oI Cor. 2:3.

^pI Cor. 2:1-5.

^qI Cor. 1:23.

^rActs 18:9, 10.

^sActs 18:12-17; I Thess. 2:15, 16.

notice them and answered that if it were a case of wrong or wicked lewdness, he would listen to them, but this was a question of words and names and Jewish law, and in such matters he would be no judge. He then drove them from the judgment seat. Gallio's action well illustrates the attitude of liberality of the Roman government, at this period, to Christianity. It was considered a Jewish sect, and hence, protected. This decision, from such a source, had practically the force of a declaration of Paul's freedom to preach in the province. Under this peculiar protection, really shielded by Judaism, its enemy, the Church of Christ made its early progress throughout the empire. In this case, the Pagan populace, the Greeks, seeing their designs on Paul thwarted, wreaked their vengeance and let loose their enmity on Sosthenes, who was the chief ruler of the Jewish synagogue. They beat him before the very judgment seat itself, and that without protest from the judge. In this way the effort of the Jews to arrest and injure Paul, resulted in their own persecution and complete discomfiture. "And Gallio cared for none of those things."

The Epistles to the Thessalonians.—Under much strain and trial^t the great church of Corinth was now founded by Paul. He looked upon it as peculiarly his own, and afterwards, as we learn from his epistles to the Corinthians, its condition caused him great anxiety. "Around his relations to it,"

^tI Cor. 4:15; II Cor. 6:13.

says Purves," "some of the most perplexing problems of his life cluster, and out of it grew some of his most important teachings. Many of his converts were with difficulty separated from their Pagan usages. They were but babes in Christ.^v Diverse elements also existed in the Church, to unite and mould which required all the authority and patience of the apostle."

It should be noted here that while in Corinth Paul composed his first two extant epistles, those to the Thessalonians. The first was written about A. D. 54. It confirms young disciples in the foundation truths of the gospel, exhorts them to go on to greater good works in holiness, and pronounces comfort to them concerning those who have fallen asleep in Christ whose second coming is made prominent throughout. The fifth chapter is particularly rich in the practical ethics of a model Christian life,^w such as the Latter-day Saints are enjoined to lead; and in doctrines that have been reiterated to them in the restored gospel of Jesus Christ.

The second epistle was evidently written soon after the first. In this, the apostasy, the gathering, the second advent of Christ, and the judgment, are the leading doctrinal topics. It corrects the error which some then entertained that "the day of the Lord is now at hand," i. e., the day of final judgment, and that therefore the return of Christ

^v"The Apostolic Age," pp. vI Cor. 3:1, 2.
196-200. ^wI Thess. 5:8-23.

then might be expected at any moment.* Paul points out that before that day should dawn, there must come an apostasy, a falling away, before the public return to Jesus to gather His people into one, and to pass judgment on the wicked.^y The early Christians were thus taught by Paul to look for foes and conflicts without and within.

Paul in Ephesus.—Having remained yet a good while in Corinth after these things, Paul took leave of the brethren; and taking Aquila and Priscilla with him came to Ephesus where he entered into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. The Saints there desired him to make his short stay longer, but he would not consent, being determined to go to the feast at Jerusalem. Promising that he would soon return, if it were the will of God, he sailed from Ephesus, landed at Caesarea, saluted the Church, then went down to Syrian Antioch^z after a probable absence of about two years and a half. He only waited a few months, and then he set out upon another campaign generally known as his third missionary journey.

*II Thess. 2:1-5.

^yCompare Matt. 24:4-14, 10, 12, 23, 25; 13:25; Luke 8:13; 18:8; I Tim. 4:1-3; II Tim. 1:15; 3:1-8; I John 2:18-27;

II Peter 3:3; Rev. 2, 3, 13, 17, 8; see also Doc. and Cov. 29: 2, 7; 17; 33:6; 38: 31; 39:20-21.

^zActs 18:18-22.

CHAPTER 31

ST. PAUL'S THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY

The Ministry of Apollos.—"I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase," were the words of Paul to the Corinthians,^a in his arguments on unity. He refuted the apparent notion which some had fallen into in Corinth that he, Cephas, and Apollos were at variance in their teachings, and that they were mere rival founders of sects. It is true, divisions concerning the manner in which the gospel was presented by each had arisen among the Christians in Corinth,^b the names of Paul, Apollos, as well as Peter, being used as those of party leaders. But it is not likely that there was any personal disagreement between Paul and Apollos,^c as there was about that time, in Antioch, between Paul and Peter.^d

Who then was Apollos? The record declares him to have been an Alexandrian Jew, an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures—that is, well versed in the Greek Old Testament, for it should be remembered the New Testament was not then extant. He came to Ephesus in the summer of about 54 A. D., while Paul was on his third missionary journey. Being instructed in the way of the Lord, and fervent in spirit, "he spake and taught dil-

^aI Cor. 3:6.

^bI Cor. 1:12; 3:5.

^cII Cor. 3:1; I Cor. 16:12.

^dGal. 2:11-14.

igently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John."^e He spoke boldly in the synagogue, and when Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took occasion to expound to him more perfectly the way of God.^f

They may even have baptized him later to the baptism of Christ, though this is not stated. He was later commended by the brethren, to the Corinthian Saints, and in his ministry at Corinth mightily convinced the Jews in public, and showed by the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.^g

The work of Apollos shows how widely the teachings and influence of John had been scattered, even outside of Palestine, and also the spread of faith in Jesus as the Messiah, among men who had never come in contact with the apostles.

While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul arrived at Ephesus on his third journey, having passed through the upper coasts. Here, strange to say, he found certain disciples, about twelve in number who, like Apollos, had been baptized, perhaps by Apollos, who, as we have seen, understood only the baptism of John, unto John's baptism, which did not include the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Of these Paul asked: "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" They answered, "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." He asked them, "Unto what then were ye baptized?" And they said, "Unto John's

^eActs 8:24, 25.

^fActs 18:26.

^gActs 18:28.

baptism." It was now that Paul gave his famous answer:

"John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Jesus Christ."

When the converts heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, in whom they had faith. "And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied."^h

The incident is valuable in that it shows the conditions of entrance into the Church of Christ; faith in Jesus, repentance, baptism by water, and by the Holy Ghost through the laying on of hands by one having authority. It also shows that baptism by water alone is not complete without the baptism of the Holy Ghost, which only those holding the higher priesthood, or authority of God, may perform.

What further labors Apollos engaged in are not recorded. The inference is that he continued a faithful worker to the end. The last mention of his name in the New Testament is in Titus 3:13, at which time he was in Crete, or was soon expected there. Jerome says he later became bishop of Corinth, for which statement there appears to be no other authority. Luther first suggested that he was the learned author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, an opinion now widely held by commenta-

^hActs 19:1-7.

tors, though there is no definite authority for the belief.

The glimpse we get of the ministry of Apollos suggests that in the early expansion of the Church, hundreds, perhaps thousands, of faithful workers in the ranks must have devoted themselves zealously to the cause, and perhaps gone through wonderful experiences in their ministry without receiving recognition at all in the preserved records, just as is the case in the restored Church of Christ in our day. Their reward, however, is nevertheless sure in the Kingdom of God.

Reflections.—Paul's boldest enterprises, and his largest conquests for the cause, were experienced in his second missionary tour. In that single march he carried the gospel over more than half the width of the eastern empire of Rome. He placed this region, in a measure, in fellowship with Jerusalem. His successes in this vast field, however prepared for him no end of sorrows. It was probably in the spring of A. D. 54, after having spent some time following his return from the second journey in Antioch,ⁱ that he began this, his third journey, during which he went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia.

This period of his ministry is distinguished as the period of his struggle with the Judiastic reaction in the Church. After his victory in the council^j he had gone forth free, with an understanding with the "pillars" of the Church in Jerusalem relating to the

ⁱActs 18:23.

^jActs 15.

freedom from the law of Moses, including circumcision. During the interval between then and his third mission, now begun, there had been a reaction on this subject. In the interval between his second and third journey, leading commentators place his collision with St. Peter on the subject at Antioch as related in Gal. 2:11-21; there seems to have followed a regular renewal of war between the Judaizers and Paul. The Judaizers had recovered from their defeat at the council, and their contention and controversies spread rapidly and raged bitterly over the field of St. Paul's mission, especially in the Galatian and Corinthian churches. Judaizers appeared in all parts, bent on insisting that all Christians must subscribe also to the law of Moses. The action of Peter and Barnabas at the feast in Antioch had of course aggravated the matter.^k Hence Paul's third mission gave him great concern in this subject. At Corinth, also, he found a number of his converts relapsing into heathen vice. All these and many other perplexities, with the care of all the churches^l rested upon him in this third mission, and his time was therefore largely employed in consolidating the conquests already won. To this end the doctrinal and apologetic interests predominate in his work and writing. His great evangelical epistles to the Galatians and Corinthians are the outcome of this time.

Paul in Ephesus.—At length reaching Ephesus,

^kGal. 2:11-21.

^lII Cor. 11:28.

and having baptized and confirmed the converts to the baptism of John, he went boldly for three months into the synagogues disputing and persuading the things concerning the Kingdom of God.^m He received little encouragement, his listeners being hardened and without belief in his message; hence, he departed from them, organized his disciples into a church, and began teaching daily in the school of one Tyrannus, perhaps a Greek lecture hall.ⁿ In this work he continued for two years.

He visited also from house to house during these years among the Saints,^o his whole stay in Ephesus lasting three years.^p About the beginning of A. D. 57 he proposed to leave for Macedonia, and sent Timothy and Erastus, a minister, ahead of him^q while he tarried till the fall of 57,^r because of the great work at hand.^s This makes the length of his whole stay in Ephesus about three years.

Five Characteristics of Paul's Ephesian Ministry.—I. Miracles,^t designed especially to offset Ephesian magic and sorcery, as in the case of the seven sons of Sceva.

2. Thoroughness in doctrinal teaching^u brought about because of his experience of errors in his earlier converts, and, as before stated, through the now known plans of the Judaistic party.

^mActs 19:8.

ⁿActs 19:9, 10.

^oActs 20:20.

^pActs 20:31.

^qActs 19:21, see I Cor. 4:17;
16:10.

^rActs 19:22.

^sI Cor. 16:8.

^tActs 19:11-20; II Cor. 12:12.

^uActs 20:18-21, 26, 27, 28.

3. Widespread success in making converts^v and preaching the gospel, by which all Asia heard the word of the Lord.^w His ministers carried the message to and founded churches in many neighboring cities.^x

4. Fierce opposition, of which the uproar of the silversmiths was only one,^y and perhaps not the most serious illustration.^z

5. The constant attention to distant churches and their difficulties and the cares which pressed daily upon him.^a

"The details of Paul's life in Ephesus would furnish a story of physical, intellectual, and spiritual activity, marvelous for its intensity and versatility."^b

A careful study of these characteristics will give the student a partial insight at best into the details of the great apostle's work during these strenuous years.

^vActs 19:10.

^wActs 19:26, 27.

^xActs 19:22; 20:4; Col. 4:7; I

Cor. 16:19; Col. 1:7; 2:1;

4:13.

^yActs 19:23-41.

^zI Cor. 4:9-13; 15:32; 16:9;

II Cor. 4:7-10; 6:4, 5.

^aII Cor. 11:28.

^bPurves' "Apostolic Age," p. 207:212.

CHAPTER 32

ST. PAUL'S THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY

(Continued)

Miracles.—As we have seen, one of the characteristics of Paul's ministry in Ephesus, and on other occasions,^a was the performance of miracles. In the ministry in Ephesus, God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul, and the record relates that even aprons and handkerchiefs carried from his body were sufficient to heal the afflicted, and to cast out evil spirits.

In this connection, we have a similar incident on record in the history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, at Nauvoo, in 1839. Wonderful miracles, in the healing of the sick, were wrought by Joseph Smith the prophet. Unable to attend all the cases himself, he gave Wilford Woodruff, afterwards President of the Church, a handkerchief and told him to wipe with it the faces of two children who were very ill and whose parents had sent for him, and they should be healed. He did so and the children were healed. President Woodruff kept the handkerchief, by request of the prophet, as a league between them as long as he lived, and it is yet a sacred memento in the care of President Woodruff's family to this day.^b

^aActs 19:11-20; 28:3-6, 8, 9;
compare Matt. 8:2, 3.

^b"Leaves from My Journal,"

Woodruff, ch. 19; "History of the Church," Vol. 4, pp. 4 and 5, note.

Returning to the narrative of Paul. There were wandering Jewish exorcists who practiced the magical arts and sorcery which so widely prevailed in the atmosphere of Ephesus, who tried their magic in the name of Jesus Christ, saying, "We adjure you by Jesus, whom Paul preacheth." The seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish high priest, so tried to exorcise, but miresably failed. The evil spirit answered them and said: "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?" Then the man who was beset by the evil spirit leaped on them and prevailed against them to such an extent that they were compelled to flee out of the house naked and wounded.

When this became known to the Jews and the Greeks who dwelt at Ephesus, they magnified the name of the Lord Jesus. Many believed, confessed, and showed their deeds, or in other words repented, who had used magical arts. Many also who had before practiced these curious arts of magic brought their books together and burned them before the public, amounting in value to about \$10,000. "So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed."

The incident shows that powerful miracles were wrought by the apostles in the name of Jesus, and testifies to the force of the Priesthood or authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, and its supremacy over all sorcery and magic whose resolute foe it has been from the beginning.

The incident further emphasizes the absolute need of having proper authority when administering the ordinances of the gospel. Paul's author-

ity was heeded, even when he could not be present but sent his word and token for the relief of the afflicted, and for the expulsion of the evil spirits; but those same spirits heeded not even the name of Jesus Christ when used by those without authority. This truth holds good, not only in the healing of the sick, but in baptism, confirmation, ordination to the priesthood, and in every other ordinance of the gospel. We are, therefore, justified in the conclusion expressed in our fifth article of faith: "We believe that a man must be called of God by prophecy, and by the laying on of hands, by those who are in authority, to preach the gospel and administer in the ordinances thereof." This, too, agrees with holy scripture, which bears testimony that no man can arrogate this authority, to act in the name of the Lord, to himself.^c He must be called directly of God as was Aaron; or, by revelation and inspiration of those who have already received divine authority from this source—which is the same as being called of God. The Lord recognizes authority thus received, but where men take it upon themselves to act without authority in the name of God, every recorded instance has resulted in a manifestation of the displeasure of God.^d

Business.—Evidently business had its bearing upon the Ephesians, even as it has upon the communities of our day. While Paul was in Ephesus,

^cHebrews 5:1-5; Ex. 28:1.

^dSee discussion in "The Gospel," Roberts, ch. 30; "Jesus

the Christ," Talmage, pp. 362, 368, note 7; Doc. and Cov. 68 and 107.

where he so untiringly preached the true and the living God, his doctrine came in contact with the silversmiths who made silver shrines for Diana, the idol of the Ephesians, and sold them to her worshipers, "who brought no small gain unto the craftsmen." It was a renumeration business. Demetrius, one of these silversmiths, took the lead and called together the workmen of like occupation to his. He directed their attention to the fact that by this craft they made their money. Not only was Paul saying to the people of Ephesus that gods made with hands were no gods at all, but he was preaching this, to them, pernicious doctrine throughout all Asia. And furthermore, he was not only spoiling their trade, but was despising the great Diana and destroying her magnificence "whom all Asia and the world worshipeth." The workmen were aroused to anger, and cried out, having their income and job as a basis for their enthusiasm: "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." The whole city was filled with confusion from this agitation. Two of Paul's companions in travel, Gaius and Aristarchus, were arrested and rushed into the theatre, and great crowds followed in the excitement, most of the people, as is generally the case in the excitement of a public uproar or mob, not knowing what they were come together for, and each one only adding to the general confusion. Paul wanted to join in the demonstration and defend his companions, but some of his friends wisely persuaded him to keep away. The Jews put forward Alex-

ander, perhaps a Jewish coppersmith,^e who tried to get the attention of the mob, but when they saw that he was a Jew they would not hear him, but cried only the louder for two hours, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians."

No telling how long the tumult might have lasted, if the town clerk had not assured them that there was present no one but knew that the Ephesians were worshipers of Diana and the image which fell down from Jupiter. As this could not be denied, he called on them to be quiet, for Gaius, Aritarchus, and Paul, were not robbers of churches, nor yet blasphemers. If Demetrius had anything against them, he had recourse to the law, and their business troubles could be determined in a lawful assembly, and not by a mob in a tumult. There was danger that for this day's uproar, the government might call them in question. The clerk then dismissed the assembly.^f

It need only be suggested that tumults of a similar nature have frequently been experienced in the ministry of the elders of the Latter-day Saints, in modern days, who also declare a visit of Christ to the earth and the restoration of the gospel to the Prophet Joseph Smith. They have been persecuted for cause quite as significant and unjust.

Paul at Troas.—The tumult of the populace, caused by the complaint of the silversmiths, hastened Paul's departure from Ephesus. But he had done a remarkable work during his long stay there,

^eII Tim. 4:14.

^fActs 19:23-41.

for Ephesus, which was afterwards the home of the apostle John, became the most powerful center of Christianity in the later apostolic times. Going from Ephesus into Macedonia he went over the ground of his former visit, giving to the churches much counsel and exhortation; he then came into Greece and remained in Corinth for a period of three months. Here his enemies lay in wait for him, and he decided to return through Macedonia instead of going direct to Jerusalem, or Antioch in Syria, as he had before contemplated. His associates, as whom there was quite a party,^g went ahead of Paul to Troas. Luke went with Paul by way of Philippi, and they probably visited the several churches on their way.^h Luke describes the journey minutely.ⁱ Reaching Troas, Paul and Luke remained with the other members of their missionary party for seven days.

One incident that happened here is noteworthy. It shows that the first day of the week, the day of the Lord's resurrection, (our Sabbath) had now superseded the Jewish Sabbath, and was beginning to be observed by the Christian churches, for we are informed that on the first day of the week the disciples came together to partake of the sacrament.

On this occasion, also, Paul, being ready to depart on the morrow to Miletus, preached long to them, his exhortations continuing until the early morn. He was filled with anxious zeal for the wel-

^gActs 20:4.

ⁱActs 20:7, to 21:16.

^hActs 20:5, 6.

fare of those who were to be left behind, and evidently did not heed the passing of the time. About midnight a young man named Eutychus fell asleep, perhaps owing to the heat of the many lamps, as he sat at the window, and, falling to the ground from the third story, was taken up dead. Paul in the midst of the following excitement went down and embraced him, and bade the congregation not trouble themselves, for his life was in him. Then Paul went upstairs, broke bread, and continued talking until morning. As he departed, at the break of day, the people were not a little comforted to have the young man brought to them alive.ⁱ Paul, by the power of the Priesthood of the Master, had raised Eutychus, even as Peter at Joppa, by the same authority and power, had commanded Tabitha to arise from the dead.

From Troas to Miletus.—Paul was now on his final journey to Jerusalem. It was in the spring of A. D. 58. He was anxious to be at the headquarters of the apostles by Pentecost, owing perhaps to the fact that it was the feast when free will offerings were made by the Jews, hence determined to sail past Ephesus. Coming to Miletus, some thirty-six miles south of Ephesus, on the way the vessel was delayed. Paul felt it unsafe in the meantime to return to Ephesus, as it was not known when the vessel might sail, so he sent word of his presence to the elders, asking them to come and call upon him.

ⁱActs 20:7-12.

Paul's Speech to the Elders of Ephesus.—When they came to him, he delivered to them, doubtless in some retired spot on the seashore, his affectionate farewell address.^k It was intensified by deep emotion, and characterized by grave earnestness, in which he declared that he was free from the blood of all men, for he had not shunned to declare to them all the counsel of God. He cautioned the elders to take heed that they "feed the Church of God which He hath purchased with His own blood." Then he gave them the sad but prophetic shadow of the coming apostasy: "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." He commended them to God, told them how in the years he had been with them, he had never coveted any man's silver or gold, but that with his own hands he had ministered to his necessities, taught them to support the weak, and impressed upon them the words of the Lord Jesus: "It is more blessed to give than to receive," He told them furthermore that he went bound in spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing what should befall, save that the Holy Ghost witnessed that bonds and afflictions awaited him. He also declared that they should see his face no more. When he finished, he kneeled and prayed with them, and they all wept, fell upon his neck, and kissed him, sorrowing most for the words

^kActs 20:17-38.

he had spoken that they should see his face no more.

The Gospel Doctrine of Giving.—Evidently one of the motives which actuated Paul in going to Jerusalem at this time was his great affection and solicitude for the Jews,^l and his hope that the gifts of the Gentile churches might open the hearts of the law-bound believers in Jerusalem to the grace of God, concerning the Gentiles. To this end he had ordered collections from the Gentile churches for the needy and persecuted Jewish Saints in Jerusalem, on this, his third journey, which he hoped would unite the Jewish and Gentile Christians, and counteract the Judaistic propaganda, so zealously carried on by certain parties, and which had given him so much anxiety during this journey. He thought that this willingness to help would exhibit the true grace of God to the mother Church, by the daughter churches among the heathen; and hence we find that he attached great importance to these collections for the Saints in Jerusalem, in his epistles.^m

The Christian doctrine of giving, as a test of sincerity and love, with its rewards, is thus summed up by Paul, as an example for all time to the Church of Christ.ⁿ Giving is a voluntary act;^o the privilege is universal, belonging to rich and poor alike, according to ability;^p and it is to be in proportion to income.^q These truths were also beautifully taught

^lRom. 9:1-15.

^mI Cor. 16:1-4; II Cor. 8 and 9; Gal. 2:10; 6:6-10.

ⁿII Cor. 8 and 9.

^oII Cor. 8:8-12; 9: 1, 2, 5, 7.

^pII Cor. 8:1-3, 12-15; compare I Cor. 16:1, 2.

^qII Cor. 8:12-14.

by Alma, and the principle practiced by the first Stains upon the American continent, in the forest, near the waters of Mormon.^r

The rewards of giving is joy;^s increased ability to give;^t increased thankfulness to God,^u and the glorification of the gospel and of God.^v

In addition to the law of tithing, which is the perfect law of proportion, the Latter-day Saints are enjoined to give the food that they would eat on the fast Sunday of each month for the benefit and blessing of the poor.

^rBook of Mormon, Mosiah 4:18-27-30. ^tII Cor. 9:7-11.

^uII Cor. 9:11.

^sII Cor. 8:2. ^vII Cor. 9:13, 14.

CHAPTER 33

PAUL'S JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM

Close of Paul's Third Missionary Journey.—Having thus said his farewell at Miletus to the elders of Ephesus,^a Paul and his company came straight to Cos. This was a little island located off the coast of Caria and which was famous for its rich and comfortable country life. Its people also are said to have been noted for their beauty and character. It was the center of one of the oldest and greatest medical school in Greece—the famous temple of Aesculapius.

On the day following, they landed at the brilliant Grecian city of Rhodes, founded in B. C. 408, and located about twelve miles from the mainland on the extreme northeastern point of the forty by twenty mile island of Rhodes. It was here that the famous Colossus, one of the wonders of the ancient world, a statue of the sun-god, was erected. In Paul's day it was a splendid city, enjoying fine harbors and commanding the eastern Mediterranean trade. Its harbors are now choked with sand, and its commerce is scarcely worthy of mention.

The company then went to Patara, a city closely connected with the cultus and the oracle of the Greek god, Apollo; also one of the cities forming a link in the chain of coastal trade cities, which had been maintained a thousand years or more before

^aActs 20:17-38.

the advent of our Savior and which, in the centuries immediately before and after Him, attained vast proportions. It was here that Paul and his company abandoned the ship in which they had so far journeyed. And here they found another vessel bound for Phenicia, by the direct sea voyage. Upon this they went aboard and set forth, leaving Cyprus on the left, and sailed into Syria, landing in Tyre, where the ship was to unload her burden.^b

Paul Forbidden to go to Jerusalem.—At Tyre the company remained for seven days visiting with members of the Church. The disciples here were told by the Holy Spirit to entreat Paul not to go to Jerusalem, there to endanger his life; and they warned him of the perils he was facing^c. Paul heeded not the warning, but went resolutely forward on his way. The disciples, men, women, and children, went with Paul to the borders of the city where they all kneeled down on the seashore and prayed, and then bade him and his company an affectionate farewell. At Ptolemais, the old Canaanitish Acco, and the medieval Acre, the company stopped one day. A small band of converts residing in this place were saluted by the company, after which they departed and came to Caesarea where they were given entertainment in the house of Philip, the evangelist, one of the Seven, the father of the four prophetic virgins, and a man whom Paul, before his conversion, had assisted in persecuting.^d

^bActs 21:1-3.

^cActs 21:4.

^dActs 21:5-9.

Paul Again Warned not to Enter Jerusalem.—At Caesarea Paul and his company must have remained for some time. The record of Luke witnesses that, “we tarried there many days.”^e It was while here that Agabus, the prophet, of whom we have heard before,^f came down to them from Judea. He took Paul’s girdle and bound his own hands and feet, and said, “Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.”^g Then both the local and the traveling brethren earnestly again besought Paul not to go to Jerusalem, but Paul resolutely refused to be persuaded and, rather in rebuke to his seemingly timid friends, answered: “What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.”^h Then his companions, seeing how he would not be persuaded, ceased their efforts in this direction and exclaimed, “The will of the Lord be done.”

They then took carriage, and, with a number of the Caesarean disciples, accompanied Paul, some believed they walked, to the Holy City. An old disciple named Mnason, a convert of Cyprus, was taken along, for with him it was believed that Paul might lodge in Jerusalem in safety. Thus, notwithstanding he was fully aware and had prophetic knowledge of the dangers which confronted him,

^eActs 21:10.^fActs 11:27-30.^gActs 21:11.^hActs 21; 12, 13.

the apostle went bravely and with a heart full of love and good will to his destination, bearing to the mother Church the gifts of the Gentile Christians.ⁱ His third missionary journey was ended.

In Jerusalem.—When they came to Jerusalem, they were cordially received by James and the elders, and Paul told them particularly of the wonderful things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry; but the leaders of the Church seemed anxious about Paul's reception by the people of the Church, because of the reports that had reached them that in his foreign missionary work he had taught the Jews to forsake Moses. They called his attention to the thousands of believing Jews who were all zealous of the law, and then to his teachings that Jews among the Gentiles ought not to circumcise their children, nor walk after any of the customs of Moses.^j They therefore proposed that he show publicly, his respect for the law by paying the expenses and joining in the impending purification rites to be observed by four men who had taken a vow. They thought that the criticisms of him would then amount to nothing, when it was thus made manifest that he himself walked orderly, and kept the law. As for the Gentile Christians, nothing of the kind would be required of them. They were only to keep "from things offered to idols, from blood, and from strangled, and from fornication."^k To this Paul, being always willing

ⁱActs 21:14-16.

^jActs 21:17-21.

^kActs 21:22-25.

to do any reasonable thing not to offend his brethren or the Saints, consented;^l and then the difficulties begun.

His act of conciliation resulted in the very trouble it was intended to avert. Certain Jews from Asia saw Paul in the temple, and circulated a false story that he had brought Gentiles in to pollute the holy place. A riot followed and all Jerusalem was in an uproar. Paul was dragged from the temple, and the people would have killed him, had not the chief captain of the Roman band intervened. The captain ordered Paul bound in chains, and wished to know who he was and what he had done. Some cried one thing and some another, until the captain was so confused that he ordered Paul carried into the castle, the multitude following after, crying, "Away with him."^m Once in the castle, Paul asked that he might speak to the chief captain (of whom by the way, there were six in each legion of six thousand men). The captain answered, "Canst thou speak Greek?" He supposed Paul to be an Egyptian Jew who had previously made a sedition and escaped.ⁿ Then Paul told him proudly, "I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus, a city in Celicia, a citizen of no mean city: and, I beseech thee, suffer me to speak unto the people." The captain consented, and Paul, standing on the stairs, beckoned with his hands to the crowd. There was immediately silence. Then Paul made his famous speech

^lActs 21:26.

ⁿActs 21:35-38.

^mActs 21:27-34.

of defense before the multitude, in which he told the details of his conversion and a number of events in his ministry.^o

The gathering seems to have listened to him in silence until he uttered the word, "Gentiles."^p At this, the riot broke out afresh, and the people cried out: "Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live." They cast off their clothes, and excitedly threw the dust into the air. The chief captain then commanded that he be brought into the castle to be examined by scourging, that he might learn why they cried so against him.

Paul a Roman Citizen.—While they were binding him with thongs, Paul was compelled to reveal his Roman citizenship for protection, and said to a centurion who stood by, "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?"

This excited the centurion, and he went and told the chief captain what had been asked of him, and told him to beware, "For this man is a Roman."

The chief captain, upon asking Paul about it, was assured of the fact, then he said to Paul, "With a great sum obtained I this freedom."

Paul answered, "But I was free born," meaning he was a Roman born son of a father who had obtained citizenship.

The examiners straightway departed, and the chief captain was sorely afraid because he had bound a Roman.^q

^oActs 9:1-8; 21:38-40; 22: 1-16. ^qActs 22, 23-29.

^pActs 22; 21, 22.

CHAPTER 34

PAUL IN JERUSALEM AND CAESAREA

Before the Sanhedrin.—After Paul's arrest, and it had been learned that he was a Roman citizen, he was thrown into jail over night. The next day the chief captain, Claudius Lysias, desiring to know for a certainty why Paul was accused by the Jews, had him brought before the Sanhedrin, having first loosed him of his fetters. The chief priests and their council were commanded to appear to give Paul a hearing.^a

Being set before the council, the apostle earnestly proceeded to defend himself. His life had been void of offense toward God, and toward men, for he had served the Lord in all things and lived honestly. He therefore began his defense in these words: "Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day."

He had no sooner uttered the words, which virtually declared he had done no wrong, than the notorious high priest, Ananias, commanded them that stood by him to smite him on the mouth.

This outrageous conduct and insult on the part of the priest provoked Paul to reply to him the contemptuous but prophetic expression and deserved rebuke: "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall: for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law?"

The stinging reply brought forth from the by-

^aActs 22:30.

standers, and doubtless also from the council, this question to Paul: "Revilest thou God's high priest?" The answer which he returned shows Paul to have had great respect for constituted authority; he would not knowingly speak against him who held such an exalted place among the people, even though that man was a lawbreaker and a despot. While he could only hold contempt for the person, he respected the written law and the office. So he replied: "I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest: for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people.^b

Paul was now in a perilous position, and hence can not be blamed for resorting to a strategy. He saw that the membership of the council were part Pharisees, the popular and progressive party, who believed in the resurrection, angels, and spirits, and the final judgment; and part Sadducees, who believed the spirit dies with the body, and who were the strict observers of the law, the rich, and those of the highest dignity.^c They differed bitterly from each other on these points. So when Paul, who was himself a Pharisee, proclaimed himself a Pharisee, he evidently did so to divide the council, and the scheme succeeded; for, hearing his declaration that he was of this sect, and had been called in question for teaching the resurrection, there was immediately a dissension between the members. The Phar-

^bActs 23:1-5; Exodus 22:28;
see also Matt. 17:24-27; I
Sam. 24:1-7; for examples of

respect for constituted authority.

^cJosephus, "Antiq. of the
Jews," 13:10:6; 18:1:4.

isees, many of whom, let us remember, were not unfriendly to the Christians, arose and cried: "We find no evil in this man. * * * Let us not fight against God." The council broke up in confusion, which resulted in Paul's advantage. Fearing Paul's hurt, Lysias had the soldiers take him by force from the quarreling and divided council, and bring him into the castle.^d

The Love of God for Paul.—As on many other occasions, God comforted Paul, for, in the following night, "The Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul; for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome."^e

Conspiracy to Kill Paul.—While the Lord thus visited and comforted the prisoner, forty Jews conspired under oath, to kill Paul before they either ate or drank. They told the chief priests and elders of their conspiracy, and sought their aid. Paul's sister's son heard of their scheme which was to have Paul brought to Lysias on some pretext of learning more about him. They would thus have a chance to kill him. The young man told Paul who, through a centurion, notified Lysias of the conspiracy. The discovery of the plot led Lysias at once to transfer Paul, escorted by two hundred soldiers, to Felix the procurator, at Caesarea,^f to whom he wrote an ingenious letter of explanation.^g

When Paul was presented to Felix, that digni-

^dActs 23:6-10.

^fActs 23:12-24.

^eActs 23:11; 27:23, 24.

^gActs 23:25-30.

tary, learning that the prisoner was from Celicia, said he would hear the apostle when his accusers were also present. In the meantime, Paul was confined in Herod's judgment hall."^h

Ananias, Tertullus and the Jews Accuse Paul Before Felix.—The record says that in the course of five days, Ananias and an orator named Tertullus, who acted as counsel or pleader, "descended with the elders' witness against Paul. Ananias held the high priesthood from 47 to 59 A. D., and while he had been accused of complicity in many acts of violence, and sent to Rome, he had so far escaped punishment, and returned to disgrace his office by "rapacity and violence." "It was no uncommon thing for him to send his servants to the threshing floors to take tithes by force, while he defrauded the inferior priests of their dues, and left some of them to die of starvation."ⁱ He later mixed with the Romans, gained the ill will of the Jewish nationalist party, and was murdered by the populace in the great rebellion ending the siege and destruction of Jerusalem. As Paul had prophesied,^j God smote the whited wall, and his end was a miserable one.

Tertullus, the counsel, the professional advocate, without doubt an Italian who spoke Latin, knew just how to flatter Felix with gross compliments and coveted praise,^k but in a subtle way hinted that

^hActs 23:31-35.

^jActs 23:3.

ⁱSelbie, "Scribner's Dictionary of the Bible," Vol. I, p. 91.

^kActs 24: 2, 3.

they must be distasteful to so modest a man,¹ and then went on to accuse Paul as being guilty of sedition and defiling the temple, to all of which the Jews assented.

Paul's First Defense Before Felix.—To the accusation of the Jews, Paul replied with a demand for witnesses to prove the charge." He said they could not do so. As to heresy he confessed "that after the way which they called heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets."^o Felix, who was familiar with the Christians, "having more knowledge of that way,"^p cowardly made excuse and put off his decision, until, Lysias, the chief captain should come down, when he promised to "know the uttermost" of the charges against Paul. The centurion was asked to keep Paul, but to let him have liberty, and let his acquaintances come and minister unto him.^q

Paul Before Felix a Second Time.—After certain days Felix sent for Paul on the pretense of hearing more from him concerning the faith in Christ. The apostle appeared before him and his wife, Drusilla, who was a Jewess, beautiful of face, bad of character, but who was curious to hear Paul. Paul gave them such a lecture on righteousness, temperance and judgment to come, that Felix was frightened and answered, "Go thy way for this time; when

¹Acts 24:4.

^mActs 24:5-9.

ⁿActs 24: 10-21.

^oActs 24:14.

^pJohn 14:6; Acts 24:22.

^qActs 24: 23.

I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.”^r

But the procurator, in fact, was hoping for a bribe, and for that reason “sent for him the oft-ener.” The case was put off, however, and for two years Paul remained a prisoner in Caesarea. At the close of this long, silent time, when we hear nothing of the apostle, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus; and on leaving, desiring to gain favor with the Jews, Felix left Paul in bonds.^s

“The effect of Paul’s fearless testimony to the truth before Felix, affords a good illustration of how vice quails before virtue, though the former be shielded by official dignity, and the latter stands in the attitude of a chained prisoner.”^t

The Caesarean Imprisonment.—It would be interesting to know how the apostle was occupied during this period. He could not have spent his time in idleness. He was at considerable liberty, and treated with marked consideration. The confinement, however, must have been an irksome restraint on the tireless energy of the prisoner. There is no evidence that he wrote any of his epistles which are now extant, at this time.

“Yet he may have kept in communication with his churches, and he may have prepared himself by reflection and study for the work of the future, to which he still eagerly looked forward. None can tell how much the world owes to the enforced solitudes of its great leaders.”^u

^rActs 24:24, 25.

^sActs 24:27.

^t“The Apostolic Age,” M. I.

A Manual, p. 51.

^uPurves, “Apostolic Age,” pp. 234-241.

CHAPTER 35

PAUL BEFORE FESTUS AND AGRIPPA

Paul Before Festus Appeals to Caesar.—About A. D. 59, after Paul's two years' imprisonment under Felix, Porcius Festus took the place of Felix as ruler of the province of Judea. On his arrival, he visited Jerusalem, and here the high priest and the leading Jews sought to induce him to send for Paul and have him brought from Caesarea to Jerusalem for judgment.^a Their idea was to have him killed on the way, as we infer from the record,^b but Festus insisted that Paul remain at Caesarea. With a touch of disdainful dignity, he informed the Jews that it was not customary with Romans to hand over a man to judgment unheard, whatever it might be with the Jews.^c He told the Jews, therefore, that those who desired might go there with him and accuse "this man if there be any wickedness in him."^d

After ten days, the Jews appeared in Caesarea, and Paul was brought before them, with Festus in the judgment seat. The Jews laid many and grievous complaints against the apostle, but they were unable to prove their charges.^e

Paul declared in his own defense:

"Neither against the law of the Jews, neither

^aActs 25:1-5.

^bActs 25:3.

^cActs 25:16.

^dActs 25:5.

^eActs 25:7.

against the temple, nor yet against Caesar, have I offended anything at all."^f Nevertheless, Festus, answering, asked Paul if he was willing to go to Jerusalem, and there be judged of Festus on these charges. Paul, doubtless realizing the impossibility and hopelessness of obtaining justice in Palestine, made a formal appeal as a Roman citizen to Caesar.

Festus, whose attitude throughout^g seemed to have been one of official impartiality, savoring of good natured indifference concerning the technicalities of Jewish controversies, granted the appeal and decided: "Hast thou appealed unto Caesar? unto Caesar shalt thou go."^h

Paul was now again remanded to prison to await an opportune time to be sent to the Italian capital, the seat of Empire, to be judged by Caesar Augustus.

Agrippa Becomes Interested in Paul.—After a certain time, King Agrippa II, and Bernice his sister, came to congratulate Festus on his entrance into office. After they had visited many days, Festus called the attention of the king to the man which had been left in bonds by Felix. Festus went into detail in relating what had taken place—the trial, its result, and Paul's appeal to Caesar; and further that he was now in jail awaiting a convenient time to be taken to Rome.

King Agrippa became interested and expressed

^fActs 25:8.

^gActs 25:19.

^hActs 25:9-12.

his wish to hear the man himself. Then, partly, as a compliment to Agrippa, the titular King of the Jews, and also to learn what account of Paul Festus might send to Rome,ⁱ he arranged that the next day the king and his sister, with Festus, together should hear the prisoner's defense.^j

Paul's Defense Before Agrippa.—On the following day, the king, Bernice, with the chief captains, and principal men of the city, were gathered in great pomp, and Paul was brought before them. Festus introduced the prisoner, and again called attention to the charges of the Jews demanding that he should die, also to his own decision that Paul had done nothing worthy of death. He desired to learn further, before this body, what he might write to Caesar, for it seemed unreasonable to him to send a prisoner, and withal not "signify the crimes laid against him."^k

It was then that Paul received a hearing. Before this distinguished audience he now delivered his most famous apology,^l a classic in history and in defense. He besought Agrippa to hear him patiently, and expressed his confidence in the king as an expert in all the customs and questions of the Jews. He referred to his own life, from the first, in Jerusalem, among his own nation, as an open book. The Jews knew him from the beginning, as a strict Pharisee, and as such he stood even now declaring his loyalty to the historic hope

ⁱActs 25:26.

^jActs 25:14-22.

^kActs 25:23-7.

^lActs 26:2-27.

of Israel—"the promise made of God unto our fathers"—unto which promise the Twelve Tribes hope to come, by serving the Lord. He asked them why it should be thought incredible with them for God to raise the dead? He related the thrilling story of his conversion; the command appointing him on his mission to the Gentiles, that they might be turned from darkness into light, receive forgiveness of sins, and be sanctified by faith; and how he had proved obedient to the heavenly vision, and called Jew and Gentile that they might "repent and turn to God, and do work meet for repentance." For this cause the Jews sought to kill him. But he had continued to preach the things which Moses and the prophets said should come:

"That Christ should suffer, and that He should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles."

Festus at this point, exclaimed in a loud voice, "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad."

But Paul denied it, saying that he spoke forth the "words of truth and soberness."

He then spoke directly to King Agrippa, appealing to him to hear Jesus of whom the prophets had spoken, and asked: "Believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest."

It was now that the king made the famous response, so common to many even today, who know

the truth but have not the courage to embrace it: "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

Paul replied with the fire of missionary zeal: "I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds."

When the assembly broke up, the king and the governor, and Bernice decided that Paul had done nothing worthy of death or of bonds; and Agrippa expressed the opinion to Festus that Paul might have been set free, if he had not appealed to Caesar. Such an appeal, when once made, could not be set aside but must be carried out.^m So Paul continued in custody.

^mActs 26:28-32.

CHAPTER 36

PAUL'S JOURNEY TO ROME AND LABORS THERE

The Storm.—Finally, in the early autumn, of A. D. 60, it was decided that Paul should be taken to Rome with other prisoners. Every intrigue of the Jews had been brought into play to prove him guilty of some crime. But, as we have seen, Felix, and Lysias, and Festus, and Agrippa, and even the Jewish Sanhedrin, had found him innocent of any capital crime. It was not probable that the tribunal to which he had now appealed—that of the contemptible Nero—could do otherwise than exonerate the prisoner from any legal charge.

The company were dispatched to Italy under the charge of Julius, a centurion of the Augustan cohort—soldiers that belonged to the Augustini, who were veterans originally enrolled by Caesar Augustus as his body guard. From what took place on the famous journey, we shall see, at least, that Julius was a sensible and kindly man. Luke,^a and Aristarchus who was a Macedonian of Thessalonica, were in the company, which was composed of 276 people.^b The trip is therefore described with a minuteness that only an eye-witness could give. It was in the fall of the year, probably August, and approaching the time when, on account of the weather, ancient navigation was nearing its close for the year.

^aActs 27 and 28.

^bActs 27:37.

Sailing from Caesarea, they touched first at Sidon. Here Julius courteously gave Paul the liberty to go to his friends to refresh himself. And this was a great courtesy, for Roman soldiers were responsible with their own lives for the security of their prisoners. From this arose the custom of keeping the prisoners safe by chaining them, with a long but light chain, by the right wrist to the left wrist of the soldiers who relieved each other in turn. One can imagine the fearfully trying ordeal this persistent bondage must have been to the prisoner, and hence how welcome must have been the words of Julius when he "courteously entreated Paul, and gave him liberty to go unto his friends to refresh himself."^c From Sidon they sailed first north toward Tarsus, then west along the coast to Myra in Lycia. There the company found and boarded a new ship, an Alexandrian merchantman, perhaps a corn ship, bound for Italy.

The wind was unfavorable, and they sailed many days before they reached Salmone, lying on the east end of the island of Crete. Thence they came to Lasea which lay at the south center of the island. Much time was spent there, for sailing was dangerous. It was here that Paul warned them that if the voyage was continued it would be at the peril of their lives. But his warning, unfortunately, was unheeded, and the greatest number advised going at least to Phenice, near the west end of Crete.

^cActs 27:3.

Therefore, they set out, sailing westward close to the southern coast.^d

However, they did not reach Phenice, for the Euroclydon or Euraquilo, a tempestuous wind, of typhonic nature, descending from the heights of Crete, struck the vessel and drove it out to sea; the storm continued for many days with neither sun nor stars, with such severity that all hope of being saved was abandoned by those on board.^e "They were famishing wretches in a fast sinking ship," says Farrar, "drifting, with hopes that diminished day by day, to what they regarded as an awful and a certain death."^f

Paul's Moral Ascendency.—Paul, in this desperate crisis, and as he always had done, relied upon the Lord, who inwardly enlightened his soul, in answer to his prayer. It was revealed to him by an angel of the God whom Paul served and believed, that he must be brought before Caesar; and further that no man in the company should lose his life. Paul told the company of this comforting assurance, and after having censured them for not taking his counsel to remain at Lasea, he bade them be of good cheer, for, while the ship would be lost, and they be cast upon an island, no man of their company should perish.^g

The storm continued for fourteen days more, during which time, as appears from the record, all

^dActs 27:3-13.

^eActs 27:14-20.

^f"Life and Work of St.

Paul," chapter 43, p. 569.

^gActs 27:21-26.

fasted. On one occasion the sailors were about to abandon the ship in a boat, but Paul, seeing it, said to the centurion and the soldiers, "Except these abide in the ship, ye can not be saved." The sailors obeyed, cut the boat's rope, and let it fall into the sea. Paul having first given thanks to God, in presence of them all, again cheered them and bade them eat, which they did and felt more hopeful and refreshed.

Finally arriving near land, they lightened the vessel by casting out the wheat into the sea, and then as day approached they ran the ship aground. The violence of the waves broke the hinder part of the vessel. Seeing their dilemma, the soldiers' counsel was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim ashore and escape. Here another terrible danger confronted Paul and his fellow prisoners. But Julius came to the rescue, not wishing to have Paul's life endangered more, and notwithstanding the stern, rigid and unbending requirements of the Roman law relating to prisoners, he wished to show his gratitude to Paul, who had really saved them all so far, and so forbade the design of the soldiers. He, therefore, commanded every one who could swim, of that starved, shivering, drenched and weather-beaten company of nearly three-hundred soldiers, sailors, prisoners, and passengers who stood that November morning on the desolate and surf-beaten shore of Malta, to cast themselves first into the sea and get to land. This they did, and the remainder followed on

boards and broken pieces of the ship. All escaped safely to land.^h

How many joined with Paul in thanks to God for their lives, through all the perils of that month of tempests, we are not told; but doubtless some in that number there may have been.

In Melitia—Miracle of the Viper's Bite.—After landing, the shipwrecked company learned they were in Melita, or Malta, an island about sixty miles south of Sicily, which has an area of about ninety-five square miles, being seventeen miles in length and nine miles at its greatest breadth. Its circumference is about sixty miles. It is at present very thickly populated, since there are said to be 2,000 persons to each productive square mile. Napoleon Bonaparte took possession of the island in 1798, but the inhabitants soon revolted against French rule. The island was then taken by the English, in 1800, which action was confirmed at the Treaty of Paris, in 1814. The inhabitants, in Paul's day, were of the simple Punic, or Carthaginian race, mingled with Greek settlers, all being under Roman dominion.

The barbarous natives received the shipwrecked men, who were wet and benumbed, with no little kindness, and kindled a fire to warm them and to dry their clothes. With his usual activity Paul was busy gathering fuel. As he laid a bundle of sticks on the fire, a torpid viper, doubtless revived by the heat, jumped out of the bundle and "fastened on his

^hActs 27: 27-44.

hand." Seeing the venomous serpent hang to Paul's hand, and observing that he was a prisoner, the simple natives said among themselves that he must be a murderer who, though escaped from the sea, was suffering a just vengeance on land.ⁱ But Paul shook off the snake into the fire, and felt no harm. The viper's bite was considered a cause of sure and quick death, and they looked for Paul to swell and fall dead suddenly. After waiting a long time, and seeing that no dangerous result followed, "they changed their minds and said he was a God."^j Venomous serpents have now entirely disappeared from Malta, due to the intense cultivation of the land, and to settlement by so many people.

The Healing of Publius' Father.—For three months, until the beginning of February, Julius, the centurion, and his companions lived in Malta, and were treated with the utmost courtesy and consideration.

Now there was a Roman ruler or chief man of the island, whose name was Publius. He received them and lodged them for three days. His father lay sick with a fever and a bloody flux. Paul, as is and was the order in the Church of Christ, went into the sick man's chamber, prayed by his bedside, laid his hands on him, and through his administrations this man and many other sick were healed. By this we see that Paul lost no opportunity to administer in the ordinances of the gospel; and during the months they remained with the natives, we

ⁱMark 16:18

^jActs 28:1-6.

may be sure that he let no occasion go by to preach the word of the Lord. We learn also from the incident that even non-members of the Church who exercise faith may be healed when administered to by a servant of the Lord having authority. Paul made a favorable impression upon the natives who continued to show him and the company respectful consideration.

Having lost their all with the loss of the ship, the company were in great need of material help. This was given freely by the kind people of the island, who not only showered on them many honors, but gave them abundantly such things as they needed for their personal comfort.

The Journey Continued.—In the beginning of February, A. D. 61, after Paul's three months' sojourn with the inhabitants of Malta, the sea was again open to navigation. The company, therefore, sought another Alexandrian ship which had been fortunate enough to escape the storm, and had safely wintered in the harbor of the island. This ship, named "Castor and Pollux," they boarded and set out for Syracuse, on the southeast coast of Sicily. Here they remained waiting for favorable winds three days; proceeding they came to Rhegium, in the toe of Italy. Thence on the west coast of Italy they proceeded north to the lovely bay of Puteoli, near Naples. In this place they found members of the Church who desired them to remain with them for seven days, which they did, privilege being granted by the kindly disposed

Julius. "Here they rested in one of the loveliest of earthly scenes, when Vesuvius was still a slumbering volcano, clad to its green summit with vines and gardens. Paul could not have looked unmoved on the luxury and magnificence of the neighboring towns. * * * Within easy distance were the little towns of Pompeii and Herculaneum, little dreaming as yet, in their Greek-like gait and many-colored brilliance how soon they would be buried by the neighboring mountain in their total and sulphurous destruction."^k

In beautiful Puteoli, where the gospel had doubtless been preached by unknown missionaries, showing how the faith had spread throughout Italy, even at this early period, Paul, was thus permitted to spend seven peaceful days, free among brethren.^l

Paul's Arrival at Rome.—At the close of their seven days of joy, they sailed northward again for Rome, which lay only a distance of one hundred and forty miles. The stay at Puteoli made it possible for news of Paul's arrival to reach Rome, and when the brethren there heard of his coming, delegations of Christians came to meet the vessel as far as the market of Appius, or Appi forum, some forty-three miles from the capital; and again at the "Three Taverns," some ten miles further on. We cannot doubt that Paul, famishing for human sympathy and affection, was cheered by the welcome

^k"Life and Work of St. Paul," Farrar, chapter 44, pp. 555-6.
^lActs 28:11:14.

of these warm-hearted brethren, for when he saw them "he thanked God and took courage."^m

Paul's long dream to enter Rome, and the promise of the Lord in the storm to him, were accomplished; and so it was that in March, A. D. 61, in the seventh year of the reign of the tyrant Nero, he entered the Imperial City. "How many a look of contemptuous curiosity," says Farrar, "would be darted at the chained prisoner and his Jewish friends as they passed along with their escort of soldiers!"

The charge of his kind centurion now ended, Julius would doubtless neither neglect nor forget the great servant of God, his prisoner, to whom he owed not only his own life and safety, but also the lives and safety of all the men entrusted to him. He delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard, or the prefect of the Pretorian guard, who, it is generally conceded by commentators, was the upright, humane, honest and soldierly Afranius Barrus.ⁿ Paul, under his care, was suffered to dwell by himself with a soldier that guarded him.^o Afterwards he was allowed to hire a dwelling, in which, though still in chains, "an ambassador in bonds," as he wrote,^p he lived during the following two years during which his trial was pending.^q

Paul's Ministry in Rome to the Jews.—The lib-

^mActs 28:15.

ⁿPhil. 1:13.

^oActs 28:16.

^pEph. 6:20; Phil. 1:13.

^qActs 28:30, 31.

erty which Paul enjoyed in Rome, though he were in bonds, enabled him to pursue his ministerial work. He lost no time in calling in the chief of the Jews to explain 'how he came to be there, on an appeal to Caesar against his own people.' He explained that he had done nothing against the people nor customs of their fathers, and yet he was delivered into the hands of the Romans a prisoner from Jerusalem. He had called them, for this reason, to explain to them why for the hope of Israel he was bound with chains. The Jews assured him they had neither received letters nor heard any evil about him, but they added that concerning the Christians they knew "this sect was everywhere spoken against."

They accepted his invitation to hear what he had to say. He told them to set their own time for a hearing, which was done. Many came to his lodging, and he expounded the Kingdom of God and sought to persuade them concerning Jesus, out of the law of Moses and the prophets, from morning till night. He wished, as he had always desired, to offer the gospel first to the chosen race. The result, however, as before, was disappointing. Some of them believed, but the great majority who heard him, out of the 60,000 Jewish residents then in Rome, with its population of two millions, were indifferent to his message of salvation, and hurried away, with "great reasoning among themselves."

Paul Again Turns to the Gentiles.—Paul now

^rActs 28:17-20.

^sActs 28:21-24,29.

bent his efforts upon preaching to all, Jew and Gentile, who could be brought to his dwelling and under his influence. Before he dismissed the Jews, however, he addressed them with the energy of the younger Paul, applying to them, the passage in Isaiah 6:9-10, once used by Jesus,^t which prophetically declares that they should not see nor hear, because they would not, and that their blindness and deafness were a consequence of the grossness of their hearts. He then exclaimed, with strong emphasis: "Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it."^u

For two whole years Paul continued to preach, with all openness and without molestation, the true and saving religion of Jesus Christ, in the great city of Rome, in the midst of its luxury and idleness, its military splendor and love of pleasure, and amidst Nero's increasing tyranny and debauchery. No notes of danger from Nero were yet heard, by the humble but energetic prisoner, of the persecution soon to overwhelm the believer. "While the world gazed in wonder at the splendid horrors of Nero's rule," says Purves, "the obscure prisoner, waiting at his bar, with equally obscure co-laborers, was spreading quietly through the capital and even into the imperial guards and household the peaceful and pure religion of the divine Redeemer."

Conclusion.—Of Paul's life, thereafter, whether

^tMatt. 13:14, 15.

^uActs 28:24-28.

he was freed and visited Spain^v and even the British Isles and was arrested a second time, the record of the Acts is silent; and we must turn to the "epistles of the captivity," written during Paul's imprisonment in Rome, for whatever information we have on these and other points, for the account of the further growth and expansion of the Church, and for items of his own life. These epistles are original documents of highest value for information on the history and early spread and development of Christianity: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Titus, and first and second Timothy. The latter epistle contains the last words of the great apostle which inspiration has preserved, and was written just before his supposed martyrdom on the Ostian Way, the date of which has been set by Harnach as early as A. D. 64, and by Lightfoot as late as A. D. 68.

To his "beloved son" Timothy^w he opened the secrets of his heart; and whatever befel, we may be sure of the truth of his final words to him: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but to all them also that love his appearing."

^vFor discussion see Conybeare and Howson, "Life and Epistles of the Apostle Paul," 27: p. 678.
^wII Tim. 4:6-8.

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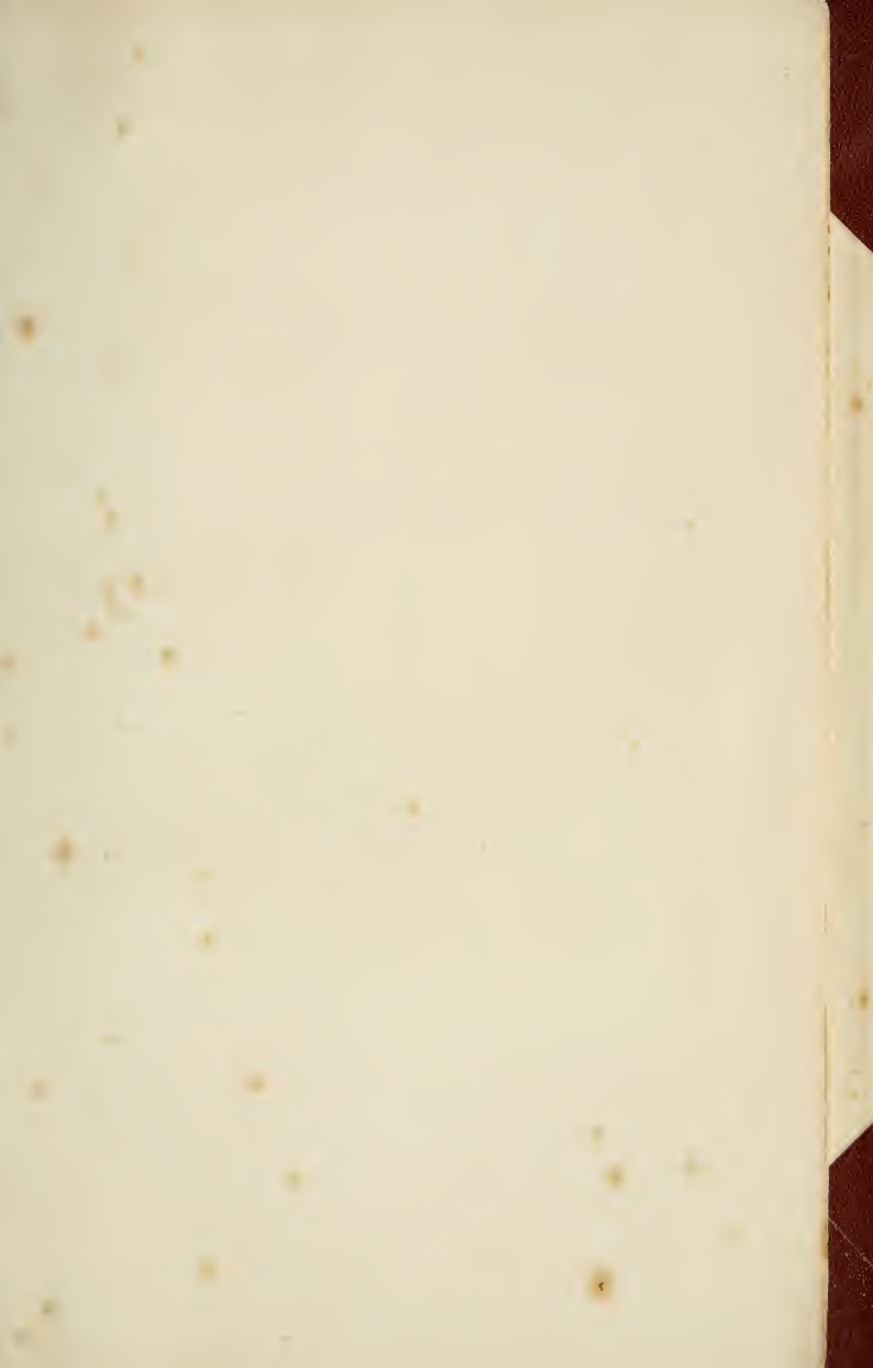
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